Photo *Rotophot*

The joys of Christmas spell for me
Good wines that freely flow,
A tip-top feed, a fragrant weed,
The lights turned low, and mistletoe,
What ho! my lads, what ho!

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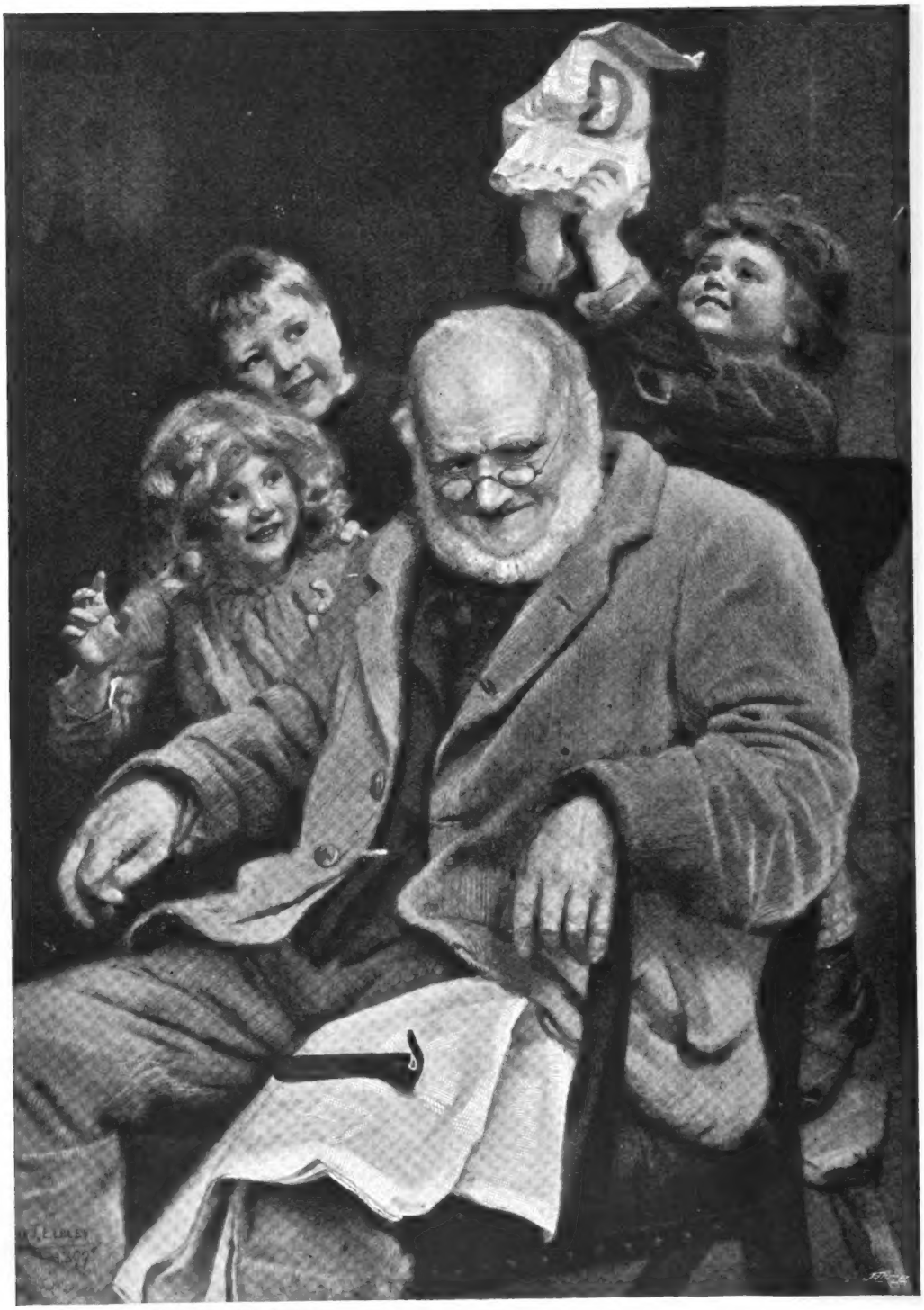

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"CAUGHT NAPPING."

From the Painting by Arthur J. Elsley.

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From Stage To Altar

Beautiful Actresses who have Recently Married Well and Married Happily.

Photo *Rita Martin.*

MAY GATES

(The Baroness Von Ditten).

From shop to moated grange—such is the epitome of the successful career of Miss May Gates. About five years ago Mr. Seymour Hicks saw Miss Gates when she was a model at Jays'. Struck with her many fascinations, it at once occurred to him that it would be best for both parties if she became a Gibson Girl in "The Catch of the Season" at the Vaudeville. She thought so too, and leaving Jays' on the Friday she stepped on the boards for the first time the following evening. Not much time lost, was there?

Not long after, a prophet, writing in this magazine, put down these memorable words: "If good looks and a sweet voice are worth anything, she is certain to get on."

The Delphic oracle could not have been clearer. Miss Gates has got on; her sweet voice and good looks have won her the title and wealth of a noble German house. She is now the Baroness Von Ditten.

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Photo *S. Elwin Neame.*

SYLVIA STOREY

(Countess Poulett).

One of the very latest captures of the peerage by the stage is embodied in the person of the young Earl Poulett, aged 25. He is the peer whose claim to the title and estates was disputed by an organ-grinder, who maintained he was the rightful Viscount Hinton, but whose pretensions were sat upon by a special committee of the House of Lords.

Miss Sylvia Storey, one of the "Havana" girls at the Gaiety, was immensely popular with the rest of the company, their only complaint being that "she never hinted that she was going to be married." One remarked:

"I knew Miss Storey and the Earl were very friendly, but—she is such a baby you know, only just eighteen. Artful little monkey! Still, good luck to her."

A refreshing feature of this match was the amiable connivance of the bridegroom's aristocratic connections, and the fact that the couple were united in church instead of at a mere registry office.

In the course of the service the wedd ng ring dropped to the ground, necessitating much grovelling on the part of the best man, who, however, managed to find it at the psychological moment, so, the mishap after all was of no great consequence.

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Phot *Bassano.*

EVA CARRINGTON

(Lady de Clifford).

"She was one of the most delightful girls we ever had," says Mr. Seymour Hicks, "and she was with us ever since she went on the stage at fourteen."

While on a visit to Dublin with the Hicks Company Miss Eva Carrington and Lord de Clifford fell in love. One of the youngest, and in another sense one of the oldest, peers of the realm, Lord de Clifford's family history is singularly lurid and romantic. One ancestor was executed, another lost his peerage and was killed; his son and heir was hidden by his mother disguised as a shepherd till the storm blew over.

The husband of Miss Carrington succeeded to the title when only nine, and was for long the youngest Master of Hounds in the United Kingdom. He is tall and soldierly; she is six feet one, and a strikingly handsome brunette.

As befits so martial a pair, they went for their honeymoon to Abyss'nia, a semi-savage region one can imagine as being none too comfortable and none too safe.

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Photo *Bassano.*

EDNA MAY

(Mrs. Oscar Lewisohn).

£50,000 as pin money. This was the nice little sum settled on Miss Edna May on her wedding day just for pin money. Judging from the cost of her trousseau, the amount will probably not be too much, the item for boots and shoes alone coming to a trifle of £150.

However, her young American husband can well afford it. He is Mr. Oscar Lewisohn, son of a millionaire copper king.

Miss May's rise to fame and fortune has been phenomenally rapid and sensational. The beautiful daughter of a postman, she went on the American stage, came to England in "The Belle of New York," and from the first night of the piece was all the rage. She rose higher and higher in subsequent plays of a similar kind.

Speaking of her engagement, Miss May said: "It was simply and solely a love-match, and a big love-match at that." Mr. Lewisohn said: "I know when I draw a prize. I wonder now that anybody can stand me at all," meaning that the rest of mankind must be green with envy. Young husbands of beautiful brides often do feel like that.

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ELSIE KAY

(Mrs. Ronald McAndrew).

Mr. Ronald McAndrew, son of a millionaire shipbuilder of Liverpool, went over to Dublin by the very boat that contained Miss Elsie Kay and the rest of the Hicks Company. He next booked a front stall for two weeks. After the first six nights, however, the stall was no longer required. By that time he had succeeded in inducing Miss Kay to elope with him to London to get married, this after a desperate attempt to get the knot tied in Dublin—a step the state of the law would not admit.

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Photo *Rita Martin.*

BARBARA DEANE

(Mrs. Basil Loder).

The marriage of Miss Barbara Deane and Mr. Basil Loder was a union between "The Gay Gordons" and the Coldstream Guards.

Mr. Loder was by no means the first in the field. Desperate appeals from frantic suitors, some of them very high up in the world indeed, had already been received. But Miss Deane turned a deaf ear to all of them.

Miss Barbara Deane is a great personal friend of Miss Ellaline Terriss. Needless to say, Miss Terriss was immensely pleased at her young friend's matrimonial triumph.

Judging by the number of young girls under her sway who have lately captured coronets, or wealth, or both, Miss Terriss would seem to be a most excellent matchmaker.

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Photo H. J. Whitlock Bros., Birmingham.

MARIE STUDHOLME

(Mrs. Harold Giles Borrett).

"It was a great surprise to me and yet it was not." Thus Mrs. Studholme-Lupton, mother of the bride. "Indeed, that very morning I said to Marie: 'Will you be back to lunch, dear?' She said she would not. I never dreamt she was off to the registrar. But she was always one to save me worry and excitement. However, I am delighted with the match, because Mr. Borrett is such a charming young man." Which is only what one would expect in a son of that distinguished commander, Major-General Borrett, who, as all the world ought to know, supervised our levies in the South African War.

The wedding took place on a Friday; the honeymoon consisted of a week-end at a bijou riverside retreat at Laleham, near Staines.

Photo Bassano

HILDA HARRIS

(Mrs. Paul Drummond).

One of the most fascinating of Gibson Girls is Miss Hilda Harris, and she is one of those who have drawn a big number in the matrimonial lottery.

Mr. Paul Drummond is a fine young guardsman, and is the son of the proprietor of a very wealthy bank. He is a lucky young fellow, for many contended for the prize which he has obtained.

Passionate appeals from all quarters of the world reached Miss Harris, only to be consigned to the waste-paper basket. One writer, referring to his utterly wretched and downcast condition, at last threatened to put an end to his "blighted life" if not answered within twenty-four hours.

No account of his demise has, however, come to hand.

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Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

DENISE ORME

(The Hon. Mrs. Yarde-Buller).

"I noticed him night after night in a particular box; he was tall and handsome, and presently a mutual friend introduced him to me."

The occupant of the box proved to be Capt. the Hon. John Yarde-Buller, of the Scots Guards, and heir to Lord Churston, and the lady on the stage who claimed his undivided attention was Miss Denise Orme. In a few weeks they were engaged, and in April they married.

"We just slipped quietly away to the Registry Office at Kensington, and I was back at the theatre at night." And the world knew nothing whatever about it till the following August!

Miss Orme's entry to the stage was dramatic. All she pleaded for was a humble chorus part, but was adjudged "not good enough." Months later, she managed to see the great man George Edwardes himself. She sang him a song, accompanying herself on the violin. He waved his hand, and lo! she was leading lady at Daly's.

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Photo Ellis Martin.

ENID LEONHARDT

(Mrs. David Wellesley Bell).

"How ever did they find it out?" exclaimed Miss Enid Leonhardt on her way back from the Poland-street Registrar's Office, where she had just been married to Mr. David Wellesley Bell. "We thought no one could possibly discover it. My husband was furious, and I—I cannot tell you how I felt!"

Miss Leonhardt, you understand, had to finish up her week at the Gaiety, and she didn't want her audiences to know that she was married. Not everyone is so clever at keeping a secret, however, as Miss Denise Orme. What the wedding party thought a dead secret was actually in course of announcement on newspaper placards at every corner!

Mr. Bell is one of those lucky men with a prosperous father before him. Mr. Bell, the elder, was a rich City merchant. Mr. David reaped where he had sown. Although only twenty-one, he has already had a first-class time. He went to Cambridge, then he had two gorgeous years of hunting and travel.

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Photo Elliott & Fry.

MADGE HODGKINSON

(Mrs. Paul Grisewood).

Miss Madge Hodgkinson is a pretty Gibson Girl—Gibson Girls are always delightful—who has used her time to good purpose. She is about the twelfth of those who recently married wealth, title, or both. At this rate, how long will the supply hold out? It looks as though wealth and titles were more plentiful than Gibson Girls.

Anyhow, Miss Hodgkinson found her harvest home in the Stock Exchange (Mr. Paul Grisewood is a young Stock Exchange man, who enjoys a full share of such good things as Throgmorton Street provides). The fact of his marrying a Gibson Girl ought to be sufficient proof of this.

The match was, of course, a love one. Even the hard-headed men of Throgmorton Street have tender hearts occasionally; and, indeed, who could harden his heart against Miss Hodgkinson?

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Photo *Fonlsham & Banfield.*

CAMILLE CLIFFORD

(The Hon. Mrs. Henry Lyndhurst Bruce).

At 3.30 in the morning Lord Aberdare learnt that his son and heir, the Hon. Henry Lyndhurst Bruce, was wedded to Miss Camille Clifford, queen of Gibson girls.

The young couple were in some considerable anxiety as to how his Lordship would take the news, and conseq ently had postponed letting nim know. Finding at last that if they didn't tell him, his very next morning paper would, the Hon. Lyndhurst and his bride motored from Torrington Squ re shortly before one o'clock to Longwood, in Hampshire, Lord Aberdare's country seat. Exactly what passed between father, son, nd daughter-in-law, h s not been revealed.

Lord Aberdare was rather a stern parent, being one of t e old school, but then and there he made his son an allowance which, together with the proceeds of the Hon. Lyndhurst Bruce's motor business, made the young couple pretty comfortable as to their immediate future.

"When did I first meet him?" says Mi s Clifford. "well, he came to tea, and I thought he was awfully nice, and that I would like to know h.m better. I got to do so, and the acquaintance ripened into affection.".

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"Miss Theo"

The Story of
A Happy Christmas.

By
John Strange Winter

I.

"And this," said a bitter young voice, "is Christmas—the season of peace and goodwill, the season of family mirth, joy and festivity. What a mockery it all is!"

The speaker was very young, a slim young girl in a shabby black frock, with the smooth face and innocent eyes of twenty. And yet the eyes were troubled, and dewy with unshed tears. Her sister, to whom she was speaking, was younger by two years. She, too, was dressed in poor black; she, too, was young and innocent. And yet there was no bitterness in the sweet voice, no tears in the limpid eyes.

"Dear Theo," she said, in a caressing voice, "dear Theo, don't take it like that. We are in a bad streak, darling, there's no gainsaying it. As for Christmas, dear—what is Christmas?"

"Well," said the elder sister, "it is what we have always looked forward to, it is what we have always enjoyed, it is what we have always worked for and lived to the very full. And now——"

"Well, after all,' said Mimosa, "we have the memories of Christmases that have gone by."

"Oh, you—you vex me! Why can't I be a little saint like you, Mim?"

"Don't be foolish, Theo,' cried Mimosa, "there's no saint about me. You go out to a dingy office, and work, and I stay at home——"

"In a dingy room,' interposed Theo.

"Well, but it's ours—I stay at home, and do nothing more than if I were your wife."

"If all wives did what you do," cried Theo, looking at her with a sort of fierce admiration, "the world would be a very different place from what it is. You—you little white saint! You make me feel ashamed of myself, of my stormy nature, my impatient heart, my—my material soul. And you're so young, Mim, to be as we are. What is it that Tennyson says? 'Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.' Those that have never known cannot miss, those that have never possessed cannot feel the same blank, those that have never loved——"

"Oh, no, no," interposed Mimosa, "I

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don't agree with you. Those who have memories are rich compared with those who have none. Think, Theo, think if you could look back upon a life all dark and dreary, all sordid, all poverty-stricken—why, you might not feel things so much, not the same things, but think what you would have missed. After all, this is the first time in all our lives that we have been as we are now. Theo, I will tell you what we'll do. I heard yesterday —that girl who lives downstairs told me— that if you go to Leadenhall Market rather late on Christmas Eve——"

"Leadenhall Market!" interposed her sister.

"Yes—I'm going with her rather late on Christmas Eve. We shall get all sorts of good things for the price of a piece of beef-steak down here. And I'll buy a few penny-worth of holly and we will have a little cake, and I'll cook you a great feast. You don't realise, Theo, how I am improving in my cooking. Why, three months ago I hardly knew how to make a rice pudding. I have made a Christmas pudding from mother's old recipe, made small, Theo, because, after all, there are only two of us. Ours used to be so big, I halved the quantities, then I halved them again; then it seemed absolutely big for two girls, so I halved them a third time. I have got quite a respectable pudding. I have put a ring in it, and a sixpence, and a button."

"You haven't!"

"I have, of course I have. One of us will get the sixpence, the other will get the ring; and the one who gets the ring——"

There was a moment's pause, a catch in the speaker's breath; and then, somehow, a slim young figure fell with a flop to the hearthrug and a wavy golden head was buried in the younger girl's shabby black skirt.

"I can't let you, I can't let you! Theo, you, —you mustn't cry like that, you mustn't, dear. You'll break me down. I shan't be able to cook our Christmas dinner, I shan't be able to go out and buy it. Don't, Theo; don't, Theo! I'm a little beast. I know all you are feeling, I—I didn't mean to wound you— I never thought of him. I—I humbly beg your pardon, Theo, I do, I do—believe me."

It was no use. The girl sobbed and sobbed and sobbed, until her misery was all spent. At last she sat up and resting her elbow on her sister's knee, remained there.

"I'm sorry, Mim," she said, brushing the last tears away. "I'm a beast to take the heart out of you."

"No—no, Theo, you were never a beast, you never will be a beast. Beasts are not made of the same stuff as you are. I forgot." And then she drew her sister to her breast, and the two sat there for quite a long time in silence. At last Theo spoke.

"So you have been planning out quite a gay little festive season for us, dearest," she said. "Well, we shall be ever so well off to-morrow. To-day old Mr. Walker gave me a cheque for a guinea. He said that he always gave the young ladies in the office a guinea because, being an old bachelor, he did not know what girls liked, and he always found among his nieces that a cheque for a guinea was more acceptable than anything he could choose with help from a young lady in a shop. I told him it was very kind. I felt for a minute inclined to tear it up and throw the pieces in his face, but I forgot I must not be proud now."

"I think you are wrong, Theo; a kind action should never make you feel wretched. Now, with that guinea we can do great things in the way of Christmas. And by the by, Theo, that girl who lives downstairs——"

"Yes, what about her?"

"Do you know, she's worse off than we are."

"Poor wretch!"

"She is; she makes more money, but she hasn't a soul belonging to her, not one person in the world who is even a distant relation. I didn't really believe there was anybody quite like that unless they are foundlings. She's not a foundling, either; she has just nobody left. Her father was an only child and her mother was an only child; she's an only child. It's like a tragedy."

"Well, she's used to it," said Theo.

"No, I think not; she has never got used to it."

"What does she do? Or has she money?"

"No, no money. She makes a little, does a little journalism, writes stories — she manages. She is working for Fame. Meantime, she is dreadfully lonely. She was thinking of going to join the Lonely Dinner at her club. She asked me to-day if we should like to join her and spend at least part of the day with her."

"Is she nice?"

"Oh, very."

"What is her name?"

"Her name is Mary St. John. She has got quite a nice room, much nicer than ours. She has ideas. She always keeps flowers on her table. She always spreads herself a proper place and treats herself exactly as if she were two—one half Mary St. John and

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the other Mary St. John's maid. You would like her, and if you don't mind—and you mustn't mind, Theo—I'm going with her to Leadenhall Market on Christmas Eve."

"You must do as you like. I can't go with you; I promised to go and see that poor old lady on Christmas Eve. She's the one person in the world I can't let drop, because she would miss my visits so much. It's awfully hard work going to her because, being so nearly blind, she can't see how different everything is. She doesn't realise that I am any different from when I was Miss Nepean of Queen's Gate. So, dearest heart, if you want to go on your mission of discovery you must just do as you like, independent of me."

II.

It was Christmas Eve. The cold was intense. Snow had fallen the previous day and again during the morning, but not in any appreciable quantities. The pavements were hard and white. The wind came whistling round street corners with an edge like a knife. There was no moon, but the stars were shining frostily overhead.

"Oh," said Mimosa Nepean, as she and Mary St. John reached the street, "how cold, isn't it?"

"Biting!" said Mary St. John, throwing the end of her broad stole across her shoulder. "Are you sure you are warm enough?"

"Oh yes, oh yes! I—I really am very warmly dressed. But it is cold."

Each girl carried a large string bag over her left arm; each tucked her hands still farther into the recesses of her muff.

"I think, you know, Mary," said Mimosa, as they trudged along towards the corner where the 'buses were to be found, "I think that any great alteration of family life kind of paralyses the system. Two years ago, I shouldn't have thought it cold."

"Two years ago, my dear girl, you wouldn't be going to Leadenhall Market late on Christmas Eve. If you had been going anywhere you would have gone in a well-warmed brougham."

"Yes, that is true," said Mimosa; and she heaved a little sigh in spite of her brave resolutions.

However, she gave herself a mental shake as they sped along, and by the time they reached the corner where they found the 'bus already standing she was her own little cheerful self again.

"Now, if you want anything to-night," said Mary St. John, after they had got out of the omnibus, "remember that you don't know the ropes and I do. Just give me a hint, and I will buy anything you want for you. It will mean a great deal of difference if you go putting in your oar, because you are not used to it, and they will spot you like a shot. I have bought my experience, my dear, and to tell you the truth I have found it horribly expensive."

"I won't utter a word," said Mimosa, "I will just whisper in your ear that this duck or that chicken looks very nice, and—er—and you will——"

"Oh, I'll do the rest," said Mary.

"What is that light in front?" said Mimosa nervously.

"Oh, my dear, that's the old Frivolity Theatre. Don't look at it, it will only make you yearn for stalls and other luxuries."

So Mimosa resolutely turned her gleaming golden head away, so that her blue eyes might rest anywhere but on the brilliantly-lighted portals of the Frivolity Theatre. And just as the two girls passed into the great ray of light cast from the open doorway, a young man coming in the opposite direction caught sight of her face, stared, and gave an incredulous start of complete recognition. He slipped behind a pillar and turning on his heel after they had passed him, followed them up the street. He was in evening dress with a coat heavily trimmed with fur, and he stalked them warily. Keeping out of their sight, he watched them go from one part of the market to another, saw them purchase unromantic, featherless birds and other articles, until the two string bags were bulging to repletion.

The incident told its own story. He did not know who Mimosa's companion might be, but he realised the situation in a moment. That these two girls were living on their own, and were buying provisions at the cheapest possible rate.

Then he followed them down the street and saw that they were bargaining for Christmas greenery. In the crowd he was able to hover quite near to them and he heard Mimosa say:

"Oh, but, Mary, I must have a bit of mistletoe; it wouldn't be like Christmas without it."

"Have the mistletoe, then," said Mary. "You came out to get what you wanted. But remember, we must get dessert of some kind before we go in."

By this time the snow was coming down fast. The two string bags were heavy, and the holly, which the extremely dirty vendor had tied up with a bit of string, was prickly

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and very awkward to carry. It was then that the tall young man is the fur-trimmed coat put in his oar.

"I will carry that," he said, deliberately putting a hand over Mimosa's arm and passing his fingers through the loop of string which she was just about to slip over her hand, "and the string bag, and your friend's bag."

Mimosa almost jumped out of her skin.

"Roy!" she said. "Roy! Is that really you—is it really you?"

"Of course it is."

"What are you doing here? Where did you see us?"

"Well, I was going into the Frivolity. Kitty and her husband are there to-night in a box and they asked me to join them. I was on the way to do so when I saw you and your friend pass."

"What are you doing with those things?" she exclaimed.

"I'm going to carry them home for you. But you will have to show me the way because I don't know where you live. By the by, won't you introduce me to your friend?"

Mimosa turned to Mary St. John.

"Mary," she said, "this is a very old friend of ours—Mr. Roy Glyn—Miss St. John."

He slipped behind a pillar and turning on his heel after they had passed him, followed them up the street.

"With the best intentions in the world, Miss St. John," said Roy, "I can't take off my hat—but will you consider yourself saluted in the ordinary manner?"

"Certainly I will," said Mary.

"Then, Mimosa, where do we go? What point do we make for? Have you concluded all your marketings?"

"I have spent all my money," said Mimosa. "And we have to get down to the District Railway."

"It is snowing fast," said he, looking at the snow which was coming down more densely with every moment. "Don't you think it would be a wise thing if we took a cab down to the District Railway?"

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"Well, Roy," said she sensibly, "you can take a cab if you like. I can't because I haven't any money left. But you have got to get it, you know."

However, by dint of invoking the assistance of a tattered young gentleman who was hovering round, begging to be allowed to carry "them porsels," a cab was procured, and Mr. Glyn helped the young ladies to get in, and likewise disposed of himself and the parcels.

"You haven't, Roy," said Mimosa in a whisper, "you haven't asked me one word about Theo."

"No," he said coolly, "I haven't; but, as you may have perceived, I am going to stick to you like glue until I am able to take observations for myself."

III.

Meantime, Theo Nepean, having been, according to promise, to pay her visit to the old blind lady, had got back to the little flat. It was not really a flat, you understand, but just a couple of rooms high up in a dingy house in a not very desirable neighbourhood. I will not particularise it. The postal address was S.W. and the river ran not very far away.

It was a pretty little room, though undeniably poor. The floor was covered with cheap linoleum made to simulate parquet flooring, the centre of the room being covered by a cheap rug in semblance of a Turkey carpet. There were a couple of inexpensive wicker lounge chairs and one or two small tables which, by the widest stretch of imagination, could not have been twisted into articles of value. And yet the whole was harmonious and refined. There were one or two articles of value in the room; a superb plate of square-marked Scale Blue Worcester, an old jade statuette, and a miniature which would certainly have brought thieves about the house had certain gentlemen in art circles known of its existence.

Theo came in briskly, pushed back her furs—sables that badly wanted the attention of the furrier—and dropped the burden she was carrying on the floor.

"I must make this place look something like Christmas time," she said to herself as she glanced round the room. "Mimosa is such a child. If it were just myself I should put Christmas away on one side as if I had never known it, but Mimosa is different. She's such a child, and the smallest bit of amusement, even if it is ever so home-made, helps to keep her going."

"There!" she said, in quite a triumphant tone, as she stood with the last sprig of green fir in her hand, "I think that looks very home-like."

She was just gathering up the twigs and putting them at the back of the fire when the door opened, and Mimosa, with eyes dancing and her cheeks flushed, came in all of a rush.

"Theo!" she said, "Theo!"

Theo turned her head.

"Is that you, Mim? Did you have any success—why, what's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"You look very much excited," cried Theo.

"So I am. I—I—I——"

"What is it?" asked Theo anxiously. "What did you buy? Has anything happened? Mim, don't keep me in suspense."

"I won't," said Mimosa. "I—I—I have brought—things home with me. I—they're outside—I—here, wait a minute and I'll bring them in."

She disappeared behind the door, the handle of which she had held in her hand, and a moment later Roy Glyn was pushed into the room and the door closed noisily behind him. He dropped something soft and heavy on the floor, something in a string bag, and came quickly across the room.

"At last!" he said.

Then there was a pause.

"Might I ask what is boiling in that pot on the fire?"

"That is our pudding," said Theo rather stiffly. She stood up very straight, making no attempt to hide her hands, all soiled as they were with the green-stuff with which she had been decorating the room.

"Did you make it?" asked the newcomer, with a sort of quizzical tenderness in his eyes.

"No, Mimosa made it."

"Oh, Mimosa made it, did she? Well, I shall be able to judge to-morrow."

"What!"

"To-morrow—when I taste it."

"You are not going to taste it," said she.

"Yes, I am—excuse me. I am coming to dinner to-morrow at two o'clock. Mimosa has already invited me."

"Mimosa! Mim!"

"Yes!"

"You needn't look," said Roy; "the door's shut fast. There is no getting away. It is very unpalatable, but you are face to face with a crisis in your life now, and there's no shirking it, no getting over, or under, or round it. You are going to answer to me now,

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Miss Nepean, for all that you have made me suffer during the past two years. Two years, Miss Nepean, have I been hunting you up hill and down dale; two years filched out of my life, stolen from me. Don't talk to me, Miss Nepean, you can make no excuse that will serve you."

"I—I don't know what you mean," said Theo.

"That," he replied in a very bland tone," if you will excuse me for speaking with perfect plainness and sincerity, that is not true. You know perfectly well what I mean, unless your brain has developed qualities of an order which is quite new to me. Now, Miss Nepean, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Nothing," said Theo, "nothing!"

"Oh! Nothing? It's easily said. May I ask how you propose to make up to me for the vile and abominable way in which you have treated me?"

He caught her hands and drew her towards him.

"I don't propose to make up to you," said Theo.

"Oh—oh, you don't? I see. May I ask what your intentions are, then?"

"I haven't any intentions," cried she desperately.

"Oh! I am beginning to see daylight, Miss Nepean. You haven't any intentions?"

"No," said she, "none whatever."

"That's as well," said he, "because you will be more amenable to those that have."

For a moment she looked at him desperately. Then her lip began to quiver, and Glyn's heart immediately failed him.

"Theo," he said very gently, "joking apart, the time has been long, and the way very dreary. I don't know what your idea was in disappearing as you did—something to do with money, of course—but it was a bad idea," he added triumphantly, "it hasn't worked."

He caught her hands, and drew her towards him.

"I've been decorating," cried Theo shakily, as he looked down upon her blackened fingers. "They are not always like—that."

"It would not matter," said he quietly, "if they were. They would be yours, anyhow."

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How to Compose Charming Pictures on a Table Top, with Toys and China Figures for Models.

By Turner Morton.

If you were told that it is possible to take beautiful photographs of landscapes on a tiny table top in a tiny parlour, you would think your informant mad. But he would be speaking sober truth; for Mr. Newton Gibson, a clever photographer of Hebden Bridge, in Yorkshire, has been taking beautiful landscape photographs on a table top in a parlour throughout the past two years, and has perfected a method for composing artificially scenes that rival Nature.

This charming scene was composed of the china figure of a cow, some twigs, brown paper, cotton wool, and a sheet of tin.

When first you glance at his photographs you think: "What a clever landscape photographer!" Here is the picture of a cow standing beside a fence, looking into a pool which is shaded by overhanging trees, a natural, pleasing composition. The cow's head is slightly raised, and in imagination one can hear her plaintive "moo"—for clearly it is milking time. Who would guess that the cow is a china figure, only a couple of inches or so in height; that the fence and the trees are merely twigs from an eighth of an inch to two inches in thickness; that the peaceful pool is a sheet of tin; that the rocks are brown paper, the sky is cotton wool, and that the whole subject was composed on a

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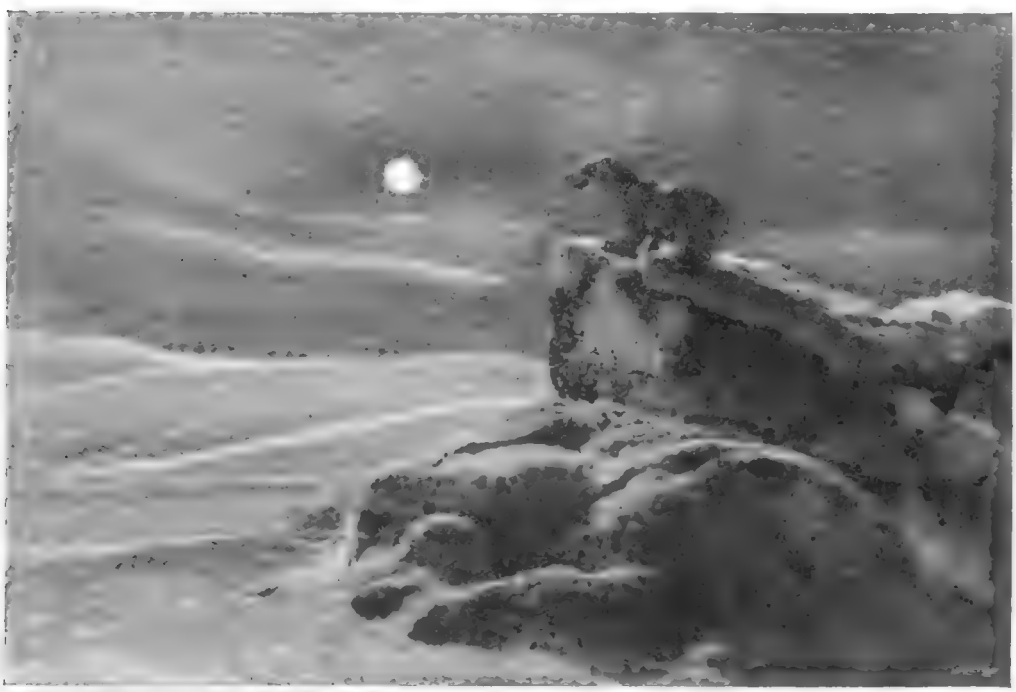
table top about three feet square? With his table, an incandescent gas-lamp, a few scenic backgrounds, a few reflectors, and a big collection of models—china and cardboard toys from an inch to six inches in height; pebbles for rocky mountains, fine castor sugar for snow, brown paper and tissue paper, Mr. Newton Gibson finds it impossible to exhaust the possibilities of subject-pictures.

In one picture a baby lies in a cradle, guarded by a dog. In another, you see a little lonely cottage, set in a landscape buried in snow. In a third, a polar bear looks out from a rock top over an illimitable waste of ice and snow, refulgently lit by the moon. Here is a girl, as pretty as a Dresden china figure—which indeed she is—sitting with her dog by a style, waiting for her lover to cross the field. Marcus Stone might have composed this rural idyll. Or we look at a charming interior—a simple cottage room—where a baby gives her puppy his supper. The walls of the room are only brown paper, the curtains are only tissue paper, the figures are only china, and all is make believe; but it would deceive a trained eye, and the effect is charming.

A Dresden china doll and a model dog so arranged as to make a picture worthy of Marcus Stone.

But what purpose, you



A triumph of tabletop landscape photography. A moonlight arctic scene, made with a dummy bear, and castor sugar as snow.

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A make-believe cottage interior. The walls are of brown paper, the curtains of tissue paper, and the baby and puppy are models. The lighting gives the whole a most realistic effect.

ask, is served by this artificial way of composing pictures when natural subjects are everywhere at the photographer's hand? To begin with, here is a hobby which will hold all its devotees enthralled. It enables the photographer, like the painter, to give his fancy free rein, to create subjects from his inner consciousness.

To make a table-top studio is quite a simple matter. Models may be bought in numbers at toy shops or china shops, or may be cut out of cardboard, and painted at home. On a table some 3 ft. 6 in. long, an incandescent gas-lamp is arranged so that it can be moved where desired; plate-boxes will serve to raise or lower the light. Reflectors of white cardboard must be arranged to distribute the light and keep it from entering the camera's lens. The scene can be set on a piece of paper or cloth some sixteen inches square. Then a background, some twenty inches long and ten inches high, will be necessary. Much ingenuity may be displayed in arranging the various reflectors so as to obtain the best lighting effects; each photographer will no doubt discover ways of his own.

Mr. Newton Gibson supplies a few "don'ts," which should be borne in mind: Don't employ shiny models, nor models too large to be well illuminated. Don't employ very dark models. Don't make the line of sight too high or too low. Don't have too much light directly in front of the models. And don't make too dense a negative, for in snow-scenes you will thus lose the beautiful middle tones of your fine castor sugar.

A portrait lens may be used, with the smallest stop, so that the whole scene may be in focus. With rapid plates and a good light, the exposure will vary from thirty seconds to three minutes. Models of six inches in height will be found generally quite as large as can be managed; if larger, there will be difficulty in illuminating them evenly. It is surprising how a scene set with the tiniest models appears in a photograph to be quite natural in size.

The rest may be left safely to the imaginative powers of the experimenter. Beginning with simple subjects, such as one or two china figures prettily grouped against a quiet and simple background, he will soon scale the heights of this art, ever improving with practice until he can take a landscape photograph on a tiny table in a tiny parlour that will appear, for all the world, to be the result of a visit to some beautiful haunt of Nature.

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A Story of Ups and Downs.

By E. R. Punshon.

I.—UP—with Aunt Jane's Legacy.

It was ten minutes to seven, and as the 6.14 is due at 6.42, little Mrs. Brown had taken her accustomed place at the front room window, peeping through the curtains for the first sight of her Henry, as he pushed open the garden gate and looked to see if she were watching for him.

Everything was ready; the kettle was boiling on the kitchen hob; in the only sitting room, where she was waiting, the table was spread with the cleanest of cloths and the brightest of crockery, with crusty, delicious bread, the best butter the whole of this suburb could provide, and some real home-made jam. Best of all, and a mighty secret, there was keeping gently warm in the kitchen oven, what one can fairly say, without heat or exaggeration, was probably the finest and fattest fowl this whole broad land of England has ever produced.

Mrs. Brown, waiting at her window, continued to exercise patience for two more minutes and a quarter, and then she pouted.

"I daresay the silly old train will be hours late," she mused, and pulled the corners of her pretty mouth as far down as lack of practice would permit.

Pretoria Avenue, the place of Mr. and Mrs. Brown's abode since their recent marriage, is a new street in a new suburb, and consists of six houses, of which two are empty and three are not yet finished. The sixth is the home of the Browns. It is off Mafeking Road, which is off the High Street, where the motor-cars pass up and down on their way to Dover and the south, and it is as lonely a spot as can well be found within half-an-hour's train journey of the City.

It was because of this loneliness of the place that little Mrs. Brown happened to notice particularly two big, rough looking men who seemed to be hanging about the street corner, just in front of their window, as if waiting for somebody or something. Mrs. Brown noticed that one of them had a new brown leather bag exactly like that which was her Henry's daily companion to and from the City. It even had gilt initials on it, just like Henry's, and looking at it keenly she fancied that the last letter of these initials was "B" though she did not think the first one was "H."

She continued watching these men idly, wondering what they wanted, and why they

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seemed to look about them so keenly, when the garden gate creaked and little Mr. Brown appeared. She waved a hand to him, and he smiled brightly, but did not wave a hand back; for how could he when he needed them both to hold his brown leather bag with all the requisite care this occasion called for?

Little Mrs. Brown ran to open the door, and, entering, Mr. Brown deposited his bag on the ground, put a foot on it to defeat any designs it might have of disappearing on its own account, and kissed her.

"Did you get it, Henry?" she asked anxiously.

"It is in there," he answered, indicating his bag.

"Oh—h," said Mrs. Brown, looking at the bag with very big eyes. "Oh, Henry."

"That bag at this moment contains £237 8s. 4d. in cash and bank notes," asserted Henry, and a smile spread slowly and broadly over his face. "What do you think of that, Mary?" he asked.

What Mary thought of it was best expressed by her countenance.

Picking up the bag, which he again held with both hands, and a look of defiance and resolution Mary secretly admired, little Mr. Brown went into the scullery to wash, while Mary proceeded to brew the tea, a duty she had momentarily forgotten in her excitement. When Mr. Brown returned clean from the scullery he found her surveying the tea pot, which she was on the point of eclipsing under a cosy, with a serious and pensive air.

"Poor dear Aunt Jane," she sighed.

Mr. Brown at that looked as sad as the beaming content of his spirits would permit him.

"Still," he urged, "I am sure it would please her to think we were having the use of it."

Mary looked just a shade doubtful of this, so Mr. Brown urged that someone had got to have it, and better they than the Home for Lost and Starving Cats, to which Aunt Jane had during her life-time made occasional references. This view of the case cheered Mary up, and she asked Mr. Brown if he were hungry.

"Ravenous," asserted Mr. Brown, "would be a better word."

Mary smiled at this, and turning to the oven produced that memorable fowl she had been keeping warm there.

"Well, upon my word," said Mr. Brown amazed, "doesn't it look good!" After he had duly admired it, he added: "But, I say, Mary, isn't that rather going it?"

Mary admitted that it was rather going it, but urged in defence that it was not every day one received a legacy like poor Aunt Jane's.

Mr. Brown admitted the plea, and while they discussed the chicken, they also discussed various methods of using the contents of the brown leather bag, comfortably reposing in full sight of them both on a chair near at hand.

"I declare," said Mary looking out of the window, "there are those two men still hanging about—and how they do stare."

Mr. Brown, not much interested in stray men in the street, continued his remarks on the subject of how best to invest capital, and then Mary said she would like to see the contents of the brown leather bag. She said she thought it would then seem more real to her. At present it was all too much like a dream. Besides, it would be the experience of a life-time to see such a sum all gathered together in one magnificent heap of wealth.

So she cleared the tea things away, and Mr. Brown opened the bag, took out the money, put back some books and papers, including a big ledger he had brought from the office, and replaced the bag on a chair near. Then he spread out on the table £200 in ten pound bank notes, and £37 8s. 4d. in gold, silver, and copper; next he pulled up the blind as far as it would go, that his treasure might be displayed the better.

"There," he said.

"My!" said Mary, clasping her hands.

They stood looking at it and admiring it for some minutes. Mary opined that it was almost wrong for any two people to own so much all to themselves. Mr. Brown combated this view hotly. He said there always had been rich and poor, and there always would be. If Providence, in its infinite wisdom, had chosen to place them in the first category rather than in the second, it did not become them to cavil, but rather to prove themselves worthy of the riches that were theirs. Mary said humbly that she had not meant to cavil, only she wished everyone could be rich, too.

Mr. Brown kissed her, but pointed out very kindly that that was impossible.

"We'll put it all in the bank to-morrow," he said, "and then we can decide how to use it"; and just then the door opened and the two men Mrs. Brown had observed lounging at the street corner walked calmly into the room.

"Don't you make so much as a sound, either of you," said the foremost of the two—the one who carried the brown leather bag Mary had noticed before—"unless you want your insides kicked out. Bill, cop the swag."

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II.

DOWN—In the Cellar with the Coals.

For a moment Mr. and Mrs. Brown could only stare in a trance of amazed bewilderment, but when the second man advanced quite calmly to the table and proceeded to lay sacrilegious hands on their own Aunt Jane's legacy, they awoke to the reality of what they had hitherto supposed some wild and monstrous delusion of their too-heated brains.

Mr. Brown clenched a by no means formidable-looking fist. Mrs. Brown screamed. But the first man whipped a knife out of his pocket, and, seizing Mr. Brown in a capable grip, menaced his throat with it, while the second man clapped a large and dirty hand over Mrs. Brown's mouth and pushed her down into a chair.

The first man whipped a knife out of his pocket, and, seizing Mr. Brown in a capable grip, menaced his throat with it, while the second man clapped a large and dirty hand over Mrs. Brown's mouth.

"We don't want to 'urt you," said the other man; "so don't you go for to make us do anything rash."

"We'll wring both your necks, soon as look at you, though," added the first man.

"How . . . how dare you?" spluttered Mr. Brown, furious with indignation and yet feeling himself helpless in the grip of an armed man of twice his physical strength. "How . . . how dare you?"

"Lor', I don't know," said the first man.

"Bless you," said the second man, "we've done 'otter jobs nor this afore we was that 'igh;" and he indicated a distance of about fifteen inches from the floor, so that he and his companion must have commenced early indeed.

"You'll be sent to prison for this," stammered Mr. Brown; "the police . . . look here, if you go away quietly we won't say anything more about it, but if you don't, you'll be arrested and sent to gaol."

"It wouldn't be the first time," said the first man grimly, and he tripped Mr. Brown up and deposited him neatly on an adjacent chair.

"Only thing," said the second man, "is as they've got to catch us first."

"But—but—" protested Mary bewilderedly, while she watched how, as in a bad dream, the second man swept their Aunt Jane's legacy into his pockets, "but it's our money."

It is possible she thought the two men had overlooked this important point and that all that was necessary was to call their attention to it.

"It was your money, mum," corrected the second man, slapping his pockets, "but it's ours now."

"We don't go in for small jobs like this 'ere as a rule," said the first man. "Our line is more jewellery and such-like."

"Now, you keep quiet," the second man urged them, noticing certain signs of restiveness they were beginning to display, "or else you'll get what you won't like."

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"They can scream their little 'eads off," said the first man. "No one can't 'ear 'em 'ere."

"They had better not try," said the second man threateningly. "I've a constitootional objection to noise, and always did 'ave. No, we don't go in for small jobs, but when we looked through your window and saw your table fair covered with coin, what could you expect a cove to do?"

"We was to meet a pal at the corner 'ere," explained the first man, "and then we saw you through the window like a blessed bank."

"So we slipped round and come in by the back door, and 'ere we are," said the second man, "and now, I suppose, so we can get off safe and quiet like gentlemen without you going and yelling after us, we shall 'ave to cut both your throats and bury you in your own front garden."

Mrs. Brown screamed faintly at this awful threat, and Mr. Brown, jumping up, seized a chair that was composed chiefly of matchwood and glue, and swung it in mid-air.

"Lor', now, the infant Herkles to the very life!" said the second man admiringly.

Mrs. Brown flung her arms around her husband's neck.

"Henry, Henry, don't be rash!" she cried.

"Well," said the first man, "what do you say to being locked up in your coal cellar? That'll give us a bit of a start, and when you get out you can make as much fuss as you like."

"There's our pal now," said the second man, as a motor-car's horn hooted impatiently without; "make hup your minds sharp, for we've got to go in a 'urry, so we 'ave."

Mr. Brown, brandishing his chair in mid-air, and desperate with thoughts of his Aunt Jane's legacy, was for fighting, but Mrs. Brown was very emphatically not. Mr. Brown, having thus three against him, yielded, whereon the second man took him by the collar, while the first man, depositing his brown leather bag on one of the chairs, offered Mrs. Brown his arm. In another couple of minutes the unhappy Browns were safely immured in their own coal cellar, while their two visitors sped away with every penny of Aunt Jane's legacy.

III.

UP—WITH THE DUCHESS OF FOXFORD'S DIAMONDS.

BLACK as night was the cellar, or black as the coals that it contained, but blacker still was the despair that reigned in the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brown.

"Aunt Jane's legacy!" said Mr. Brown, with his hands clutching his hair.

"Those awful men!" groaned Mrs. Brown.

"Every penny gone!" said Mr. Brown. "Every farthing!"

"And very likely my silver spoons as well, boo-hoo-hoo!" lamented Mrs. Brown.

"I ought to have resisted," said Mr. Brown. "I ought to have struck them with that chair. Help would have come."

"If you had resisted they would have killed you, Henry," Mrs. Brown pointed out.

"I wish they had!" said Mr. Brown awfully.

At this Mrs. Brown wept afresh, and accused him of no longer loving her. Stung by such a reproach, Mr. Brown roused himself, and, groping in the darkness, found first her waist and then her lips.

"Let's shout for help now," said Mrs. Brown, comforted a little. "Could you reach to put your head out of the coal shoot, do you think?"

Mr. Brown thought he could, but decided he wouldn't. Instead, he groped for the hammer they used to break the coal with, found it, and with heavy blows of extreme violence, the sound of which made Mrs. Brown shiver and shake, he recklessly smashed open the cellar door. Emerging into light once more they went sadly up the steps, in melancholy mood down the passage, and so sorrowfully into the front parlour.

All was as it had been. The two men had evidently been content with their plunder and had not sought further booty or done any damage. Even the brown leather bag still lay carelessly on one of the chairs. Mrs. Brown looked and found her silver spoons untouched. This was a great relief to her, and from that moment she began to recover.

"Never mind, Henry," she said soothingly to poor Mr. Brown, who sat with bowed head on the red plush settee, "it might have been worse."

"Think of all the things we were going to do with that money," said Mr. Brown in hollow tones.

"Don't let us think of anything of the sort," said Mrs. Brown very sensibly, "Henry, you ought to go to the police."

Henry supposed miserably that he ought to, but added that the police were no good and made no effort to stir. Mrs. Brown, looking round the room again to make sure nothing else had been stolen, let her eye fall on the brown leather bag quietly reposing on a chair near. Her careless glance became

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interested; she rubbed her eyes and looked again.

"Henry," said she slowly, "just look at your bag—at the initials!"

Henry snivelled and looked. He rubbed his eyes and looked again.

"It's a different initial!" he gasped. "It's 'A. B.' instead of 'H. B.'! How's that?"

"It's a different bag," said Mrs. Brown. "It is bigger and has a different handle, and it is older, too."

"Very extraordinary!" said Mr. Brown blinking.

"They must nave taken your bag and left their own," declared Mrs. Brown.

"I suppose they thought mine was better," said Mr. Brown with renewed bitterness. "It only needed this for a finisher."

"Was there anything in it?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"Some books and papers and a ledger belonging to the office," replied Mr. Brown desperately. "I expect I shall get the sack for losing 'em."

Mrs. Brown picked up the bag.

"It's heavy," she said. "You ought to take it to the police. It will be a clue, anyhow. I wonder if there is anything in it?"

"Dark lanterns, and things of that sort," suggested Mr. Brown moodily.

Mrs. Brown opened the bag, put in her hand, and the first thing she drew out was a belt in the form of a diamond snake with two big rubies for eyes and a tail of emeralds. The next thing was a diamond tiara. The third thing was a diamond necklace, with one great pendant stone whose dazzling brilliance drew from even the amazed Browns a low "Oh-h-h!" of admiration; and no wonder, either, for, though they did not know it, this was the famous Raj Sha Sahib diamond. Next came a rope of pearls a yard long, and next a diamond brooch like a living flame, and then another diamond brooch, and then what seemed a kind of corselet of diamonds, all brilliant and glorious to behold.

"There's heaps more," said Mrs. Brown faintly; "the whole bag is just crammed with 'em, stuffed in anyhow."

She and Mr. Brown exchanged a foolish smile.

"I suppose it's my head," said Mrs. Brown, "but everything seems to be running round and round like anything"

"Where is the evening paper?" asked Mr. Brown hoarsely.

"Oh, he has gone mad—it only needed that," wailed Mrs. Brown, and wept over the diamonds tears more bright than they. "The evening paper indeed," she groaned.

"There's heaps more," said Mrs. Brown faintly; "the whole bag's just crammed with 'em, stuffed in anyhow."

"Where is the paper?" repeated Mr. Brown unheeding her, and speaking in the same hoarse tones; "my evening paper?"

He grabbed the paper from where it lay, turned it this way and that, found the front page finally, looked at it, and then seized his wife round the waist.

"Just look at that, just you read that," he ordered.

Very much frightened Mrs. Brown obeyed.

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The first thing she saw was in big letters:

£5000 REWARD.

Underneath in almost equally big letters ran a string of headings: "Duchess' Jewels Stolen"—"The Famous Foxford Heirlooms Gone"—"Most Magnificent Collection in the World Looted"—"Not a Stone Left"—"The Foxford Diamond Serpent Gone"—"The Raj Sha Sahib Diamond Gone"—"No Clue"—"The Thieves Get Clean away"—"Huge Reward Offered for the Recovery of the Jewels to Anyone not a Confederate."

"My!" said Mrs. Brown. "Oh, my head."

"These are them!" said Mr. Brown excitedly; "they must be!"

"But if them," said Mrs. Brown, pointing to the diamonds, "are these"—and she made a gesture to the paper—"what are they here for?"

"Why," exclaimed Mr. Brown, hurriedly thrusting the jewellery back into the bag, "evidently those two men who robbed us are the two who stole these diamonds the paper tells about. They said they had arranged to meet someone near here. That would be an accomplice they were going to escape with. While they were waiting they saw us looking at our money. Very likely they wanted ready money to help in their escape, so they came in here and stole it. You remember when we heard a motor hooting they said that was for them, and then they seemed in a hurry. After locking us up they must have run into this room for their bag and picked up mine by mistake and never noticed, and left their own behind."

"Oh, my!" said Mrs. Brown again, turning rather pale.

"Go and get your hat," said Mr. Brown, "and be as quick as you can."

"Are we going to the police?" asked Mrs. Brown, putting on her hat, and then wildly running two long, sharp instruments of steel into her head.

"Police? No! Not me!" said Mr. Brown with emphasis.

"Where then?"

"Why, to Grosvenor Square to call upon the Duke of Foxford," said Mr. Brown, not without a certain swagger. "And jolly glad his Grace will be to see us, too, I'll bet!" he added.

"Oh, my, Henry!" said Mrs. Brown, awed.

But Mr. Brown was perfectly right.

The Duke of Foxford was jolly glad to see them.

But his jolly gladness was as nothing compared with the more than jolly gladness of the Duchess. That lady looked as if she would have liked to hug Mr. Brown, and she did hug Mrs. Brown. On this eventful night Mr. and Mrs. Brown enjoyed a second dinner, *tête-à-tête* with a Duke and a Duchess of the realm, and when after midnight they left Grosvenor Square for their remote suburb, a carriage and pair of the Duke's was turned out to convey them thither. Also Mr. Brown had a cheque for £5000 in his pocket, and a promise of a new situation at a large increase of salary in the Foxford estate office.

Mrs. Brown has only two regrets—first, that on that memorable night all the neighbours were asleep, and none saw their triumphant return in a ducal carriage and pair; secondly, that she did not, while she had the opportunity, pop that diamond tiara on her own head for just one second, to see how it suited her.

Mr. Brown has also one regret—that he was not invisibly present when his two visitors opened his bag and discovered what they had done, and how they had stolen an office ledger and left all their Foxford booty behind them.

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My Life—by a Spider

The Thrilling Life Story of the World's First Aeronaut.

By E. C. Andrews.

In the heart of the New Forest, a few miles north-west of Brockenhurst, there is a narrow, ribbon-like stream. Winding out of an oak wood, across the open heath, through fields of bog myrtle and festoons of bedstraw, it joins forces with the Lymington River, and tumbles over a waterfall into an inclosure of pines.

In the depths of this inclosure, which is just large enough to conceal the river from view of the surrounding heath, I found my friend, a moderate-sized, brownish spider.

The spider sat upon a stone by the river bank, cleaning its somewhat wolfish face with its front legs. It looked so lean, weak, and exhausted that I thought an inquiry concerning its health was the fittest way to open the conversation.

"You look ill," I observed sympathetically.

"I am ill," replied the spider; "ill, tired, and very frightened."

"You surprise me! I should have thought it impossible for a strong, capable creature like you to feel ill, much less frightened."

"Ah, that's the worst of coming to conclusions before ascertaining the preliminary facts," said the spider. "I expect an account of my career would open your eyes not a little. To begin with, are you aware that my family are among the most illustrious the world has ever seen? We are the first individuals to ascend into the air without wings. Such creatures as bats and flying squirrels don't count, for they inherit membranes on their legs and shoulders to fly with. We, on the other hand, born without wings or membranes, contrive to mount into the air—an achievement only shared with us by mankind. And even here I suspect we are the victors. When did you people first learn how to fly?" "It was about the year 1709," I answered. "Ah! I thought as much. We spiders have been floating about ever since the dawn of civilisation. You shall hear how it happened.

"One day in early autumn, my mother—then two years old—was sitting in the interior of her web by the side of the stream when

"She detached the egg cocoon from her spinnerets, seized it in her jaws, and walked out of her web."

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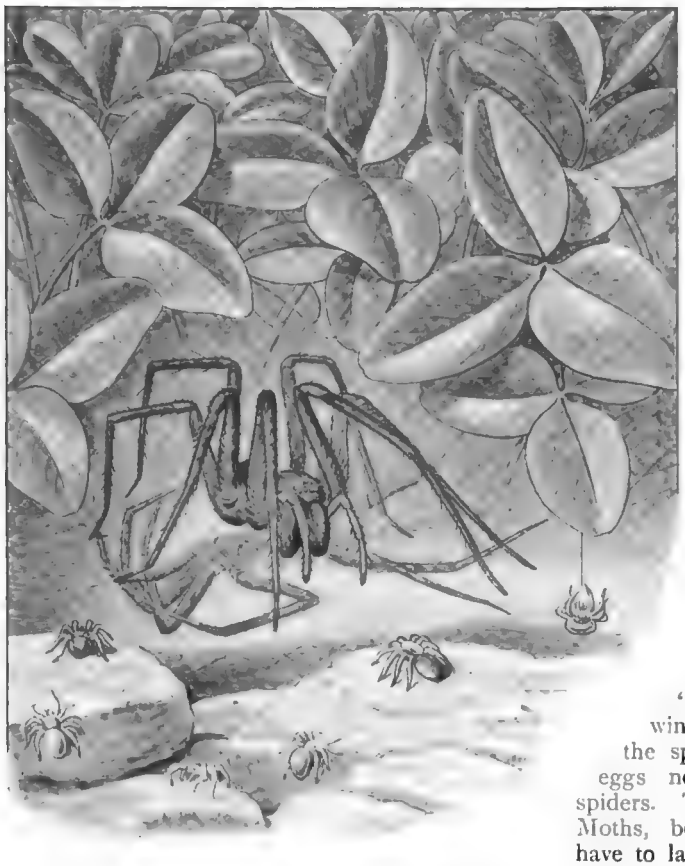

"I listened attentively, but in reality was not half so curious to know about myself as about the dead body under her feet."

she started laying eggs. Producing one after another in quick succession, she went on till she had laid about three hundred. As they became more numerous she had recourse to her spinnerets — half-a-dozen little glands ending in tubes at the end of her body, out of which come thin threads of silk. Working her spinnerets vigorously, she rolled the eggs round and round with her legs, covering them up in a dense coat of web, till at last the whole thing took the shape of a yellow ball of silk, as round as an orange and soft as the most delicate wadding.

"When the laying and spinning were over, she detached the egg cocoon from her spinnerets, seized it in her jaws, and walked out of her web. Her idea was to convey the eggs higher up the bank, where they would not be overwhelmed by flood. After much toiling and puffing up the bank she at last reached the top, and crammed the egg cocoon into a dry, stony crevasse, and left it there, returning at once to her home lower down by the water's edge.

"For the next few weeks had anybody discovered us we might have been mistaken for a tiny little woollen pod of seeds. Yet, even in this disguise, scarcely a moment passed without the risk of an enemy hunting us out. One still, cool evening, a fiendish blue and yellow bird came hopping briskly along the bank, peering sharply into nooks and crannies, and now and again pulling out some unfortunate insect from the grass and gobbling it up. It was a blue-tit, busily searching for egg cocoons. Luckily our mother had crammed us into an extra snug and dark retreat, and we escaped unnoticed.

"Well, we passed through the winter as eggs, and hatched in the spring. We came out of our eggs not as caterpillars, but as spiders. That is extremely important. Moths, bees, beetles, and butterflies have to labour through caterpillarhood and chrysalishood before they reach the perfect state; but we spiders, like our estimable friends the grasshoppers and cockroaches, do things in a rush. We walked out of our eggs as baby spiders —tiny, pale brown, pudgy little baby spiders smaller than a pin's head. I have never been more profoundly struck, by the by, than by the vast inferiority of moths and butterflies to us spiders. Everything they do is silly and laborious, even down to flying, as you shall presently see.

"Well, after getting out of our eggs, the first thing that struck us was the dimness and mistiness of the view. You see, we were wrapped up, just like jewels, in tissue paper and wadding. The tissue paper was a little membraneous sac, which still covered us when out of our eggs, and the wadding was, of course, the silk cocoon constructed by our mother. I was one of the first to shake myself out of my sac and struggle through the silk cloud into the open air.

"For a time I felt quite lost in the vastness of that mighty valley which seemed to yawn

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beneath me like a chasm. I was so small that the grass looked like palm trees, and every insect that came along seemed as big as one of your motor-cars which I have since seen racing through the forest roads. But my solitude was soon broken by the arrival of dozens of brothers and sisters who came rolling out of the silk cocoon like so much sand, almost burying me in the squirming mass of their legs and bodies.

"'Sort yourselves out this instant!' commanded a voice close by. Everybody obeyed; and as I struggled out of the separating mass I saw a large brown spider sitting at the entrance of her web among some clover an inch or two away. It was mother. She had lived through the winter and had built a new web higher up the bank. She seemed to be sitting on the body of a dead spider very like herself, which struck me as being rather extraordinary."

"And so it was then that you heard your egg history?" I asked.

"Yes. My mother was several years old, and knew our history by heart, having laid other batches of eggs in the past. She gave me the story in every detail, with lots of grumblings about the trouble she had had dragging the egg cocoon up the bank. I listened attentively, but in reality was not half so curious to know about myself as about the dead body under her feet. So when she had finished I asked her what on earth she was sitting on.

Her answer gave me quite a shock.

"'That is your papa, my child,' she replied affably.

"'But he looks quite dead!' I said.

"'He *is* dead,' smiled my mother sweetly, 'dead as a sucked fly. Our honeymoon being long over, I am tired to death of him, and so I pounced on him and ate him up. What I am sitting on is his skin. It makes a most convenient mat for one's feet on evenings like this when the dew is heavy and the floor of my web quite wet.'

"'Shall I have a husband when I grow up, and shall I be able to eat him when the honeymoon is over?' I asked eagerly.

"'Certainly not,' replied mother. 'You are a boy spider, and one day will be devoured by your own wife. In the meantime, don't come too close to me, for I sometimes eat my own offspring!'

"There now! What do you think of that for a cheering pat on the back to a youngster just starting in life! Can you imagine a more miserable destiny than that of being slaughtered by one's own mate?" cried the spider.

"Now I begin to understand why you are feeling so frightened," I answered. "But, after all, some of us human beings are theoretically devoured by our wives, so you're not an exceptional case."

"I was sitting in my web in the hope of attracting a fine fat fly sitting on a reed an inch away, when, all of a sudden, the wings of the fly fell off."

"But that is not all," replied the spider. "I have not finished my history. Of course, directly my mother commenced talking about eating her offspring I ran away as hard as I could.

"Steadying myself well on my eight legs, I started crawling swiftly down the sloping bank till I reached the stream's edge. Imagine my delight when I found I could walk on the water as easily as upon land!"

"I did not know that a spider could do

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that," I remarked in tremendous astonishment.

"Ah, you little know what we can do when we are put to it," replied the spider. "Yes, some species of my family can walk on the water, and I am one of them. We have relatives that can dive and live in a bubble underneath, and other relatives that jump on land like kangaroos. You ought not to be surprised at our aquatic tendencies, for we are rather closely related to crabs and lobsters."

"You certainly are rather like a crab," I admitted.

"Only crabs have ten legs and we have eight," promptly added my informer. "But let me get on.

"As soon as I found myself on the water I made my way to the nearest cluster of reeds and started spinning a tiny web to catch flies in. Before doing this I crawled up a reed and had the pleasure of finding a rich harvest of tiny green wingless creatures as small as myself. I ate as many of these as I could, and succeeded in swelling myself out to nearly twice my original size."

"How did you eat them?" I asked.

"I seized each one by the skin of his back, gnawed a hole with my jaws and sucked his blood," replied the spider. "When this was over, I built a little web home among the reeds and entered upon the chief business of my life, that of waiting till small flies became entangled in the mesh, and then pouncing on them directly they were caught.

"My web mesh caught many flies, and I grew rapidly. About once in three weeks or so I had to crawl out of my skin, which never grows as fast as my flesh. This was somewhat tiresome. I always came out with a new ready-made skin on, but occasionally I tore off a leg in the struggle."

"How extremely painful!" I exclaimed sympathetically.

"I was about to lower myself when I saw a gigantic wasp sitting on a leaf right under me."

"Well, I confess it did hurt," admitted the spider, "but not so much as it would if I were a human being or a caterpillar. When a caterpillar loses a leg it almost invariably dies. But when we spiders lose one we grow another in its place, like our relatives the crabs and lobsters. I lost a leg on two occasions, and it took many weeks to get fresh ones.

"Well, I need not enter into details regarding my life on the stream. I shall pass at once to an event which changed the entire course of my existence. One morning I was sitting in my web, bobbing to and fro in the hope of attracting a fine fat fly sitting on a reed an inch away, when all of a sudden the wings of the fly fell off. I never saw anything so extraordinary in all my life. They simply fell off, and lo! and behold there sat a huge queen ant—the most ferocious ant that ever lived."

"Queen ants cast their wings after marriage," I said. "You might have known that."

"But I didn't. I simply sat and stared in amazement, and before I had time to recover, the creature started muttering to itself. 'Bothe!' it exclaimed, 'bother! I might have known my wings were due to fall off to-day, and here am I landed in the river and unable to fly any more. It's a mere chance that these reeds are thick enough to furnish me with a pathway to the bank. That's a nice little spider over there. I'll take it home with me to the nest to eat.'

"You can guess I had no inclination to meet such a monster face to face, so I at once dropped out of my web on to the water and paddled off as hard as I could go.

"But my troubles had only just begun. I had hardly gone a yard when a strange quiver in the water attracted my attention, and, turning round, imagine my consternation when I saw a huge horny water-beetle

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swimming after me. What did I do—race him? Not a bit of it. Already I saw fresh trouble ahead in the shape of a dragon-fly caterpillar crawling up a reed and glaring at me with ferocious eyes. There was nothing for it but to resort to the air.

"So I proceeded at once to emulate the famous habit of my ancestors. Steering towards a lotus leaf that glowed in a patch of sunshine, I scrambled on to its smooth white surface and stood up on my hind legs with my face towards the heavens. From my six little spinnerets, or web valves, in my tail, I squirted six little streams of web. These six streams united into one thread, which lengthened and lengthened as it floated upwards. I continued to squirt until I had a streaming strand about a yard long. The strand floated upwards as easily as thinnest smoke. It glittered like spun glass. There was an upward current of hot air caused by the sun's rays on the leaf, and it was partly from this upward current and partly from a soft summer breeze that I gained my momentum. Relaxing my hold on the leaf I folded my eight little legs across my breast with the cord of web passing between, and in this way floated from the stream's surface up into the pines above.

"The breeze took me through a rift in the pines into the open country. I was now sailing quite fast across the heath, like a man on the end of a parachute only with the umbrella part knocked off. On I went through the palpitating heat towards some bushes growing by the upper reaches of the river. During my transit I noticed large numbers of my brothers and sisters ballooning in a similar way. But alas!—several birds called swallows were skimming amongst them and rapidly thinning their ranks. I gave a gasp of fright as I realised that even in the air I was not safe, and at once lowered myself by a lengthening thread on to the bushes by the riverside.

"But still my troubles were not over. Everybody seemed to be conspiring to-day to test my abilities in an emergency. I had caught on to a hawthorn bough and was about to lower myself when I saw a gigantic wasp sitting on a leaf right under me, busily cleaning itself—a horrible monster, with bright yellow stripes and a black, dragon-like head.

"Now, we spiders like to catch wasps in our meshes, and twist them round and round with web till they are powerless to move or sting, after which we suck their blood. They are large, juicy, and sweet, and last us for days and days. But should we be caught away from our webs the tables are turned. Wasps then delight in catching *us*. They pounce on us, grip our backs in their jaws, and convey us off to their nests, where we are ignominiously served up for supper. I had no desire to be treated like this, and so resorted to further feats of skill.

"Once more I displayed my cleverness. I did not wait for the wasp to see me, but instantly severed myself from my web and dropped like a stone into the depths of the bush, where I lay quite still for awhile, half paralysed with fright.

"Well, that night there was a thunderstorm. After a period of hail, lightning, and thunder, I woke up next morning to find the wind blowing hard in an opposite direction under a slate-grey sky. A feeling of indescribable loneliness came over me in that bush.

"So I crawled up the bush to an outlying stem, stood up on my hindlegs, ejected a strand of web into the air, and shot off like a piece of fluff in the teeth of the gale.

"How I got back I cannot imagine. It was by sheer good luck that I entered the same rift in the pines, and descended into the very same part of the stream where I had had such good times in the past.

"The weather seemed to improve after my arrival. But I was now full grown, and eager to find a wife."

"Why did you seek one, knowing your probable fate?" I asked.

"Love overpowered me," replied the poor spider in a weak whisper. "We went on our honeymoon. I enjoyed a day's bliss—and now, alas!—it is all over."

He looked piteously round, as though appealing for help. And even as he stood there helpless, there came a rustle from some neighbouring leaves, a big, fat spider rushed out, pounced upon him, and started to suck his life's blood. There was something of a struggle at first, but gradually the legs of the hapless husband ceased to wriggle in protest, and in five minutes the vampire had dropped him, an empty, crumpled skin on the stone.

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·THE·SPEED·LIMIT·

A Romance of the Great Unpaid.

By Butler Herbert.

The autumn day was a warm one, and the ill-ventilated court room in which the Whitville Petty Sessions are held had grown very close.

It was, therefore, with quite a sigh of relief that Major Mowbray, and his two brother justices, welcomed the appearance in the dock of the last defendant of the day in the shape of a smart, clean-shaven chauffeur, who, clad in spruce grey tweeds, stood, motor-cap in hand, smiling at all and sundry.

Mr. Bell, the little grey-headed clerk to the Bench, read out the charge, the said charge accusing one William Perkins of driving a motor-car on the fifteenth of the previous month at a pace endangering that somewhat nebulous quantity, the public safety.

Mr. Bell ended up with the usual words:

"Do you plead guilty or not guilty to the charge alleged against you?"

William Perkins swung round.

"It's all nonsense," he called out in cheerful tones. "The only way that car can endanger anybody is by stopping suddenly of its own accord—a thing it is very apt to do."

"That's not the question," Mr. Bell was beginning, when the defendant took him up.

"I thought it was," he cried.

"The question I asked," recommenced Mr. Bell testily, "was, do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"Isn't that the same thing?" argued Mr. Perkins.

"Come! come!" snapped Mr. Bell, dipping his pen in the inkstand before him. "Give me a direct answer at once, if you please."

"I don't want," replied Mr. Perkins with a very respectful air, "to take up the valuable time of the Bench"—there was a very slight emphasis on the word "valuable"—"so I'll plead 'not guilty' without any more argument about it."

Mr. Bell felt very much annoyed at this unexpected conclusion, for he saw before him the prospect of another weary hour spent in taking down evidence.

"Whose case is it?" he cried sharply, looking round after a moment or two's interval.

But even as he spoke the constable, whose case it was, stepped into the witness-box, the boarded floor resounding under his elephantine tread. He was a very fat, red-faced man, well on in middle life. Six feet two in height, he looked overpoweringly huge when contrasted with the more slightly built defendant in the dock.

Holding in his left hand a helmet as big as a small coal-scuttle, he took the Testament and subsequently the oath, with the easy, confident air of a man who has sworn many oaths, sacred and profane, during a twenty-five years' career in the force. He then straightened himself up to his full height, and commenced to give his evidence in a voice whose husky mellowness must have brought

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up old-time recollections in the breast of the retired licensed victualler who sat on the right hand of Major Mowbray.

"I was on dooty," he began, "on the fifteenth of last month in the arternoon, on the Eastern Road just at the corner of the 'Igh Street, where the Red Lion Hotel is sitooated.

"While I stood there a motor-car come along very fast, a-cutting in and out among the ve-hic-uliar traffic in a most owdacious manner. I 'eld up my 'and and signalled him to stop, but he took no notice, though he were a-looking right at me. Just as he went by I took his number. It were Haitch Hay ninety-two. I thereupon put it down."

P.C. Adams stopped, and producing a large black note-book, passed it across to Mr. Bell, who, glancing at the pencilled page, handed it to Major Mowbray on the Bench.

"And what did you do then?" asked Mr. Bell, when each magistrate in turn had scrutinised the constable's hieroglyphics.

"I stepped into the Red Lion," answered P.C. Adams, "and telephoned to Bootcester, and had him stopped there; or, to be akkerate, the police lit on him 'aving refreshment in a public 'ouse."

"You are of opinion, then," said Major Mowbray, "that the defendant was driving at a pace that endangered the public safety?"

"'Endangering the public safety' weren't the word for it, sir," answered the witness.

"Then what should you describe it as?" said the grey-haired, soldierly Major.

"Sudden death," said P.C. Adams sententiously, "to anythink as got in his track."

"And what do you estimate his speed at as he went by you?" went on the Major.

"Well, to be akkerate, I should say about thirty-six or sevin mile an hour," said the witness, with a great air of certainty.

Major Mowbray nodded, and Mr. Bell turned to the defendant.

"Do you wish to cross-examine?" he inquired.

Mr. Perkins most certainly did, and wheeled round so as to face the witness.

"Were you on special duty that afternoon," he began, "or were you on ordinary point duty?"

"I were on special dooty," answered P.C. Adams, "a-looking out for cars exceeding of the speed-limit, being sent in consequence of the noomerous complaints."

"Were you ordered to stand in any one particular place, such as the side door of the Red Lion, for instance?"

P.C. Adams looked rather annoyed at the smile which appeared on the faces of some of the listeners.

"No," he retorted gruffly. "My horders mentioned no particular place. It were left to my discretion."

"Now, just answer me this," said Mr. Perkins; "when you put up your hand, weren't you about three yards from the door of the Red Lion, with your back to it, walking, as it were, towards me?"

A look of relief overspread the rubicund face of P.C. Adams now that there was some prospect of his getting away from the Red Lion, the continual harping upon which respectable house of call for some reason or other seemed to vex him.

"Yes, yes!" he cried. "That's correct, I were with my back to it, several yards away."

A slight smile hovered about the mouth of Mr. Perkins, as he leant forward and buttoned up his coat, as if to emphasise his next question.

"Now," he said pointedly, "I'll just put this to you. Your back was, as you admit, to the Red Lion door. Now, might not the movement of your hand have been mistaken by me for what a man naturally does after he has been to see what o'clock it is in a public house?" And the speaker drew the cuff of his coat-sleeve across his lips, while a low hum of approval arose from the "general public" at the far end of the room.

"It might," replied P.C. Adams angrily, "if the man as seed it were a fool, or a hinfant in harms, or one of them as goes about a-tryin' to throw discredit on police hofficers."

Mr. Perkins waved his hand benignantly.

"Don't excite yourself, my good man," he said complacently. "I was only putting a case to you. There's just one more question, and then I've done."

P.C. Adams brightened up at this prospect of escaping from his tormentor.

"You said just now," proceeded Mr. Perkins, "that the pace I was travelling at was thirty-six, or seven, miles an hour. How could you tell? Had you a stop-watch?"

"No, I hadn't," said P.C. Adams.

"Then how could you tell?" persisted Mr. Perkins.

"I could tell by comparing it with other traffic as was about at the time," said P.C. Adams.

"What other traffic was there?" asked Mr. Perkins.

"There was Mr. 'Oneybone, for one," said P.C. Adams triumphantly, "a farmer and

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grazier. I am calling of him as a corroberative witness. He were a-driving in the same direction as you was, with his white mare, when you went by."

"White mare!" repeated Mr. Perkins. "How old is that mare?"

"I don't know," said P. C. Adams. "I'm no judge of 'orses."

Mr. Perkins shrugged his shoulders.

"Call your other witness," he said, turning to Mr. Bell.

"Call Ebenezer Honeybone," cried Mr. Bell.

An inspector near at hand took up the cry, and the young policeman at the door opened it wide, and shouted "Ebenezer Honeybone" at the top of his voice down the flight of stone stairs which led to the witnesses' room below. Mr. Honeybone promptly answered the call by tramping up the stairs and entering the room.

He was a tall, bony old man, dressed in a drab-coloured overcoat, beneath the skirts of which a pair of box-cloth gaiters surmounted a pair of very thick, heavy boots. He stepped into the witness-box, carefully holding in his brown, wrinkled hand a broad-brimmed felt hat.

Mr. Bell ran over the usual formula in the usual perfunctory fashion, and then pushed the Testament across to the witness.

The old man refused to take it.

"Will you say that again, mister?" he began in a harsh, dogmatic voice. "I'm a bit 'ard of 'earing, and can't foller when words is gabbled over in a hurry. I had enough of that when my missus was living."

Mr. Bell's face reddened slightly, but without a word he complied with the witness' request; while everybody, including the three magistrates, smiled broadly. This time Mr. Honeybone was satisfied, and kissed the book.

"You were driving by the corner of High Street on the afternoon of the fifteenth of last month?" commenced Mr. Bell.

"I was," said the old man, looking straight at his questioner from under a pair of shaggy grey eyebrows.

"And did a motor-car pass you?"

"It did," cried the witness with great emphasis.

"And what should you describe its pace as?" went on Mr. Bell.

"Outrageous!" cried the old man harshly. "It came up behind my old mare all unbeknownst to her, and made her jump nearly out of the shafts as it goed by. Outrageous, I calls it."

"What did you do then?" asked Mr. Bell, when he had noted the answer.

"Why, I beckons to the policeman as was standing outside the Red Lion, and axes him to get the feller gaoled straight off like."

"Ah, yes, just so!" said Mr. Bell. "Now, Mr Honeybone," he continued, "at what pace do you estimate the car was going when it passed you?"

"From sixty to seventy mile an hour," declared the old man authoritatively.

Mr. Bell with great solemnity put down this record in the way of a speedy reply, and then turned again to the witness.

"Should you recognise the car if you saw it again?"

The defendant, however, intervened at this point.

"I don't dispute the fact that I was there, sir," he said gently to Mr. Bell, who nodded and laid down his pen as a sign that he had finished with Mr. Honeybone.

The cross-examination then began. It was short and to the point.

"You are a farmer, are you not?" was the first question of Mr. Perkins.

"Yes," said the witness, "and my father afore me was."

"And you hate the sight of motor-cars?" continued Mr. Perkins quietly.

"Dratted stinking things as ought to be swep' off the face of the earth with them as owns them," cried the old man fiercely. "God Almighty never intended man to drive aught else but a horse. It's a-temptin' of Providence to drive them ingines on the highway."

"Thank you," said Mr. Perkins. "That's all I require. Just enough to show the Bench that you are an exceedingly narrow-minded and prejudiced individual as regards the question of motor-cars!"

"Narrer-minded!" Mr. Honeybone was retorting, when an inspector of police touched his elbow and gently urged him from the witness-box, amidst an undertone of rumbling threats, to a seat at the rear of the room.

There being no more witnesses for the prosecution, it became the turn of the defendant to address the Bench, and put forward any plea that he could summon up out of the recesses of his ready mind which would tend to secure his acquittal.

"The car, gentlemen," he began in a crisp, firm voice, "is my own, and I was driving from Beertown to Bootcester on the day when the offence was alleged to have taken place.

"The policeman says he put up his hand

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for me to halt, and I refused. But I assert that my pace was so slow that it never occurred to me that I was ordered to stop, and I mistook, naturally enough, the movement of his arm for something quite different, especially as the door of the Red Lion was close behind him. That being disposed of, next comes the evidence as to excessive speed. There are two witnesses, the farmer and the policeman.

"As to Mr. Honeybone, do you really think, gentlemen, his evidence is worth a moment's consideration? He may be a good judge of a cow, or a sheep, but, gentlemen, I ask you, is the opinion of a man who with their narrow crossings and sharp turnings, as the stretch on which to make up lost time."

Mr. Perkins paused for a moment, while Major Mowbray nodded, as if this theory were not unreasonable.

"Besides," resumed Mr. Perkins, "no one could drive that car at a fast pace if he tried. Even in its first season it never was capable of doing more than twenty-five miles an hour. I dare challenge its former owner to step into this box, and under oath assert that he ever broke the law by exceeding twenty-five miles

"From sixty to seventy mile an hour," said the old man authoritatively.

estimates the speed of an eight-horse power car in its third season at sixty miles an hour, worth my while and your time explaining away?"

Major Mowbray laughed and shook his head.

"But the evidence of the constable," went on the speaker, "is more difficult to refute, although equally absurd. It took me two hours to travel the thirty miles between Beertown and Bootcester on that day, an average of fifteen miles an hour, and I should hardly be likely to choose the streets of Whitville, an hour when he drove that car, even when it was just turned out from the shops."

Major Mowbray interrupted at this point.

"All this is very well," he said testily; "but it is not evidence, unless you are prepared to call the former owner of the car. Of course, if he swears that he never got above twenty-five miles an hour out of it when it was new three years ago, why, then the policeman must have made some mistake. But the point is, can you call him?"

A delighted grin spread over the face of P.C. Adams as the two remaining magistrates

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"Never no more," declared P.C. Adams.

nodded a vigorous assent to their chairman's remarks.

Mr. Perkins was not at all nonplussed. He took some papers out of the inner pocket of his coat, and referred to them.

"I bought the car," he said, as ne ran through them, "in October last year from a garage at Bootcester, where its owner had sent it for sale."

"What is his name? Is he here, prepared to give evidence?" asked Mr. Bell.

"Yes, he's here," said the defendant with a smile. "And if he's ever exceeded the speed limit, and broken the law with that car, I shall be glad if he'll step into the box and say so."

"Who is he?" demanded Mr. Bell.

The young man pointed to Major Mowbray, sitting erect and alert in the midst of his fellow magistrates.

"There he is," he said quietly. "Major Mowbray, I believe?"

"Yes," said the Major, after a slight start. "I did sell a car at the Bootcester garage last autumn."

"An eight-horse power Avignon?" supplemented the defendant.

"Yes," answered the Major, whose face had reddened slightly under its bronze.

"Then," said Mr. Perkins politely, "I must ask you to step into the witness-box and satisfy the Bench as to the truth of my assertion that the car is not capable of more than twenty-five miles an hour under the most favourable conditions. The swindler—er—er—I mean the man at the garage, said you had often driven it at fifty, but I don't think it's possible you ever gave him any authority for making such a statement. For," went on Mr. Perkins meaningly, "I cannot imagine for an instant that you would sit where you do in judgment upon others if you were in the habit of breaking the law of the land yourself in such a wanton fashion."

The gallant Major's face had grown redder and redder while Mr. Perkins was speaking, and he fidgeted awkwardly in his seat. He had a very vivid recollection of making various, to put it mildly, exaggerated statements when he intrusted the car to the manager of the garage for sale.

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"Nonsense! nonsense!" he burst out, as soon as the defendant had concluded his speech; "never exceeded the speed limit in my life."

Several uniformed constables and sergeants scattered about the court exchanged meaning glances, and a low hum of astonishment, similar to that usually given by the onlookers at a firework display when an extra-sized rocket goes up, arose from the benches at the back.

"That car couldn't do it," went on Major Mowbray. "I doubt very much if anyone ever got twenty miles an hour out of it even in its first year."

He stopped, and the face of P.C. Adams grew longer and longer as he saw the angry Major turn to his smiling colleagues, and whisper to them one after the other.

Then he looked up.

"The magistrates have decided to dismiss the case," he said shortly, "on account of the discrepancies in the evidence. Thirty-seven miles an hour from that old bone-shaker! Preposterous, preposterous!"

"Never no more," declared P.C. Adams later on that day, when he was enjoying a glass of bitter just inside the swinging doors of the Red Lion. "If the next un's going as fast as—as — blazes, I shan't bother with it." And he held out his glass to be replenished with a sigh, in which disgust and appreciation were about equally mingled.

PAST AND PRESENT.

Patricia once had pretty feet
All clad in silken hose,
And shod in dainty glacé kid
With patent leather toes.

But now a change has taken place
Most painful to repeat—
Shin-guards encase her ankles slim,
And square-toed boots her feet!

Patricia once wore Paris frocks
Of flowing crêpe de Chine,
Or Empire gowns from Liberty's
In wondrous shades of green.

But now she lives in Harris tweed,
Or heavy Irish frieze,
And will persist in wearing skirts
Not far below her knees.

Patricia used to dress her hair
The most artistic way,
In little curls and rippling waves
Tied up with ribbon gay.

But now she draws it tightly back
And puts it in a net,
And looks to me absurdly like
A third-rate Suffragette.

Now if these dire calamities
Are all to hockey due,
This forfeiting of charm and grace
And of complexion too,

This inartistic mode of dress
And hair devoid of curl—
Then, may the Fates preserve me from
The hockey-playing girl!

Grace Miller.

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PICTURE . . PARAGRAPHS.

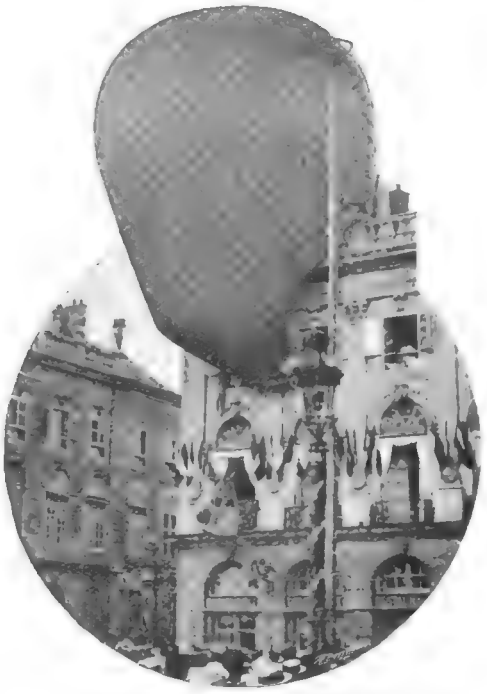
The Editor is Always Pleased to Buy Photographs Suitable for this Feature. All Pictures should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

A MOORISH PRISON.

EVIDENTLY criminals are considered a grievance in Morocco, for wise people bury their grievances and the Moors bury their prisoners, or at any rate immure them in dwellings innocent of roofs and whose floor-line approaches the level of the sea.

Thus the poor things are unable to escape, flight being further complicated by the presence of a warder standing by the wall of the prison, another sitting on it, and a third looking at the miserable convicts through a window. The photograph was taken from the roof of a synagogue.

A prison in Morocco. The photo was taken from the roof of a synagogue.



Rescuing the passengers of a foundered balloon through a window.

TO THE RESCUE.

"ANY port in a storm" is a motto as revered among aerial navigators as among those who plough the commonplace watery main. The unfortunates who manned the balloon in the picture were only too pleased to escape from the horrid bump that would have been their lot had they fallen into the street, through a convenient window situated above a well-known restaurant.

Still, after soaring gloriously up into the blue sky, it is rather a tame finish.

The last man to leave the wreck can just be seen clambering through the window, carrying the barometer with him.

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A REMARKABLE MENU.

The American Society in London always gives a banquet on Thanksgiving Day—a day set apart in the United States "on which the people shall meet in their homes or their churches devoutly to acknowledge all that has been given them, and to pray that they may in addition receive the power to use these gifts aright."

The menu on these occasions generally takes some novel form, and in 1906 it was designed to represent a pumpkin, and had an ear of Indian corn attached to it by a red, white, and blue ribbon.

The menu of the American Society in London on Thanksgiving Day. It was made to represent a pumpkin, and had an ear of Indian corn tied on to it with red, white, and blue ribbon.

Not everyone in England knows with what enthusiasm Thanksgiving Day is kept by Americans in this country. Some English people doubtless associate the festival with gratitude for the establishment of the United States as a nation, but the festival really has an origin that dates from the Pilgrim Fathers.

In every home in America, on the day set apart by the President, families gather together as on Christmas Day in England, eating roast turkey, which in their case is garnished with cranberry sauce, and their pumpkin pie, which has a very marked resemblance to an English apple tart.

As usual, the patriotic American gives thanks in the time-honoured way—by eating and drinking and making merry.

HOW TO CROSS A RIVER

The Tiber at Orvieto is spanned by a wire cable. The cable was originally constructed for the transportation of goods from one bank of the river to the other, particularly of wood for a neighbouring sawmill. But the local inhabitants, jealous of the easy fashion in which the wood journeyed from bank to bank, said: "Let us construct a travelling cradle and be equally comfortable." So the thing was done; and if the people of Orvieto do not chant the old song:

> One more ribber,
> An' dat ole ribber am Jordan;
> One more ribber,
> Dere's one more ribber for to cross,

it is merely because they are unfamiliar with its beautiful words.

The adaptability and practical bent of the Italian mind are readily illustrated by this adequate yet simple and inexpensive means of crossing a river. Probably the local traffic does not warrant the construction of a bridge.

Stereograph Copyright *Underwood & Underwood, London and New York.*

This is the way the inhabitants of Orvieto cross the Tiber. The apparatus is a small cage running on a wire cable.

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A TREE-CLIMBING DOG.

Doubtless everyone has heard of a tree-climbing dog; your doggy friend is sure to have had or known of one—"Climbed trees like a cat!" etc.

But somehow one has never set eyes on a living example of the species, or at least never when it was in the humour for tree climbing.

Koenig Graf Roland, for that is the name the dog in the picture boasts, will, however, climb trees before an audience of more than one person, while to support the statement he has had a photograph of himself taken in the act of tree-swarming, and—the camera never lies.

The incentive which induced him to climb the particularly straight tree shown in the photograph was that a cat, a particular enemy of his, had resorted to it as a last extremity.

What happened when Koenig Graf Roland reached the top and found himself in company with the cat is not on record, but without doubt a very exciting scene ensued. One can quite credit him to be the terror of the cats in his neighbourhood, and that the only place where they are safe from his attacks is on top of a brick wall.

Koenig Graf Roland, the tree-climbing dog, in pursuit of a cat, which is unavoidably left out owing to pressure on our space.

A BURMESE BOAT RACE.

The picture below is that of a Burmese racing canoe, the speed of which, to judge by the number of the crew, would put the Oxford and Cambridge eights to shame.

Each of the swarthy members composing the crew is armed with a short paddle, and the men are packed tightly together on the principle that the more numerous the paddlers the greater the speed of the canoe.

The race itself is a most exciting affair, with the captain perilously balancing himself in the middle of the canoe, shouting and gesticulating in his efforts to make the men keep time.

Attached to the winning post is a kind of rosette, which goes to the bow oar of the winning canoe.

The races are pulled off in heats, but the finals provide the greatest interest, as by then the crews are worked up to a terrible pitch of excitement.

It is not an unusual event for the captain or one of the crew to fall overboard, to the delight of all except that canoe's crew and its supporters, for the unlucky man by his action has disqualified them.

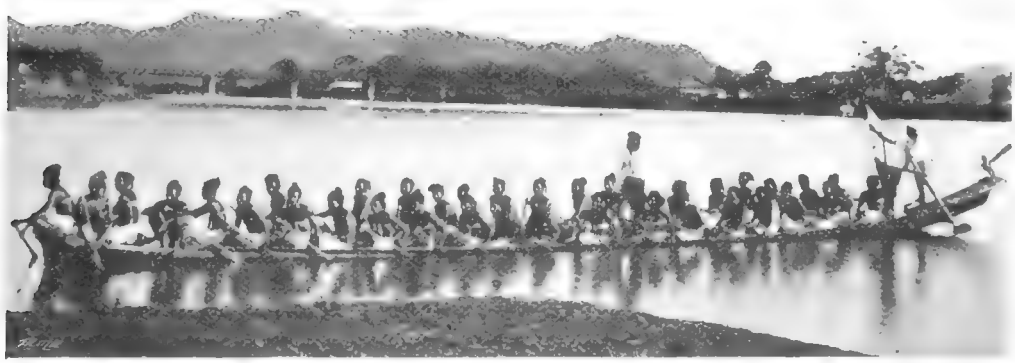

Photo *Captain W. Abbey, Falmouth.*

The winning crew of a Burmese canoe race. The figure standing in the middle of the crowded craft is the captain, who times the strokes.

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ALLIGATOR FARMING.

A New Industry.

A farm of baby alligators to the casual observer would appear of little profit, since an alligator takes about sixty years to grow up, and the only obvious commercial value the animal has is that it possesses a tough skin for which there is a steady demand.

Not so, however, thinks an enterprising individual in the south of the United States. With great foresight he is preparing an alligator farm against the time when baby alligators will be scarce and the demand for them as great as it is at the present day. The reason for the extinction of the alligator is two-fold.

Photo *Topical Press Agency.*

This lady fearlessly approaches the collection of warlike-looking alligators, and is willing to lassoo and capture any animal the visitor's choice may fall upon.

Everyone in the south of the States is hunting the alligator to death, and the tourists create a great demand for baby alligators, which they buy for fifty cents or a dollar, and, if they do not take their purchase away with them, have it sent on by mail, thereby causing great annoyance to the post-office clerks.

These tourists never seem to realise when buying the baby alligator that in time he will grow and be a nuisance, and in consequence the youngsters, after a time, are generally consigned to the nearest zoo or museum.

The zoos are now full of alligators, and the constant arrivals are all thrown into a tank, where, through suffocation or their practice of eating one another, they soon die.

However, that does not concern our alligator farmer. He foresees that the supply of alligators will cease, that the tourists' fad will still have to be met, and that the market value of baby alligators will go up.

With great pride he leads the visitor to his pens and shows him a mass of scaly-backed reptiles basking contentedly in the sun, or floating lazily on the surface of a little lake in the centre of the inclosure.

At the sight of their master they open their terrible jaws, displaying rows of teeth in a most fearsome manner, but the alligator farmer goes fearlessly on and explains to the visitor that "they're only opening their jaws for me to put something between them."

Part of the profits of the farm are derived from teaching the animals to do tricks. The alligator is very hard to train, but his stupidity is somewhat made up for by the ingenuity of his master.

Alligators lay eggs at the rate of sixty at a time, and our farmer, instead of looking for the baby 'gators, simply collects these eggs, puts them in an incubator, and sells the young to tourists, averaging a profit of from forty to sixty dollars on the batch.

But he is confidently looking forward to the time when he will obtain three or four times as much; also, in due course the hide will become more valuable owing to the scarcity of the creatures, and then he expects to become a millionaire.

Photo *Topical Press Agency.*

The sight of their master to the alligators on the farm is suggestive of a meal. It will be noticed that his pets do not feed out of his hand.

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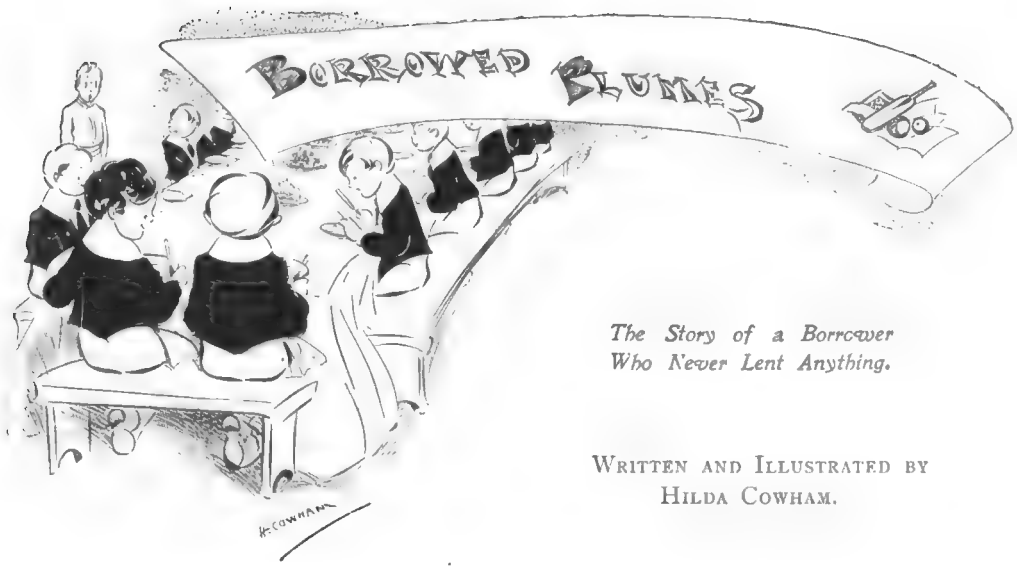

The Story of a Borrower Who Never Lent Anything.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY HILDA COWHAM.

IF there's one thing you learn at a public school sooner than another it is not to lend things. If you don't know that, you jolly soon learn it, because if you're short of something you want, and you've lent it to another fellow, it's you that gets into a row. I don't mean money, because everybody borrows money, and most fellows lend it, if they're decent. In fact, I don't know how one would get through the term without it. But when it comes to borrowing your best bat to make runs in a match against you, a fellow soon learns the folly of it, and it's the same when someone borrows your Latin verses for tags, and shows them up as his own.

When Banister came to Welton as a new boy this piece of wisdom was unknown to him. The lending part of it didn't trouble him very much, because he was one of the mingy sort. If anyone tried to borrow even a nib from him he always made out that he was just going to use it, and it was the only one he had, or that his people had given it to him on the strict understanding that it was never to leave his hands, or some fairy tale of that kind. As for borrowing a farthing off him, you simply couldn't do it, although he had more tin than several of us put together. Naturally, a chap of that nature isn't popular, and we jolly soon let him know it. But the other new kids funked him, and when he wanted to borrow anything from them they simply handed it over, and, as a rule, didn't see it back.

I found young Arkwright almost blubbing because Banister had borrowed his brand new tennis shoes to wade into the river after a bit of white china that he thought was a golf ball, and had given them back to him simply ruined; and Barkinstall, who's a light weight for his age, complained bitterly that Banister had borrowed the book he got as a second prize for mathematics last term, and had lent it to another chap, whose name he'd forgotten.

"Punch his head," suggested Jenkinson.

The subject came up for discussion at the bathing sheds one evening when Osbaldestone got out of the water and found that Banister had borrowed his towel, and had walked off with it, thinking it was his own. "What are you to do with a fellow like that?" he said, as he stood groping about, wet and shivering.

"Punch his head," suggested Jenkinson, with the air of a man who has hit on an entirely new idea.

I lent Osbaldestone a dry corner of my towel. "You can punch that kind of head

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till you smash your knuckles to a jelly," I remarked, "and you won't do him any good. He'd only borrow your Elliman's, and upset it. What he wants is a jolly good lesson, and one of these days I'm going to give it him."

I hadn't the remotest idea how to do it at the time, but Banister himself gave me the suggestion a few days later. He sent me a note during third school to know if he might borrow my pads to play at the nets. Of course I took no notice; but when I went to my locker in the playroom I found the pads had gone. I was jolly savage, and went down to the nets where I found Banister with them on, waiting to go in.

"Hullo!" I said, "they're rather classy pads you've got on. Where did you get them?"

"Oh," he replied quite unconcernedly, "I thought as you were kept in for the Greek prose, you wouldn't mind if I borrowed them—oh—oh—don't!"

I screwed his arm up a bit tighter. "Now take them off with the other hand," I said, "and the quicker you do it the less it'll hurt you."

He had them off in half no-time. Then it was his turn to bat. I went up to the prefect who was coaching at the net.

"I want to practise my leg-break," I said. "Banister swipes every ball to leg, so I should like to practise at him."

"All right, go ahead," he said.

So I put two leg-breaks into Banister, and he punished them both to leg. Then I gave him a straight one—a different kind of leg-break. He started running round the net with his leg in his hand till the prefect told him to shut up and go on batting. I gave him five or six more, and made very good practice on his pins, till at last he complained to the prefect that I was bowling at him on purpose.

"Serve you right, you young fool!" was all he got. "Why don't you put pads on?" Then turning to me the prefect said sarcastically: "Don't think much of that leg-break of yours, youngster. You'd better try it on somebody who plays a bit to the off."

It had served my purpose for the time being, however, for Banister never borrowed so much as a hint from me again. But after a little while he was just the same with the other fellows, and I began to fear the lesson had been wasted.

"Hullo!" I said, "they're rather classy pads you've got on. Where did you get them?"

"Look here," I said one day, when I heard that he had borrowed Mackintyre's blazer without even asking for it, "let's borrow off him on the same lines. If he doesn't need to ask us for what he wants to borrow, we needn't be particular about asking him."

The fellows cottoned to the hint like wild-fire, and the word was passed all round the house. Young Wessley opened the ball by borrowing his pen for afternoon school, and the next thing we knew was that Wessley was bathing his nose at the wash-basin, with the dormitory doorkey down his back. After that there was vengeance in the air.

The next thing we knew was that Wessley was bathing his nose at the wash-basin.

Next morning at breakfast there was no Banister, but there was a hushed conversation going on at our table with much suppressed laughter. If anyone not in the know had hovered near he might have heard:

"I've got his braces."

"I borrowed his beastly dressing-gown, and left it in the bathroom."

"I'm wearing his tie."

"Jenkinson's got his bags on. They're so tight, he's afraid they'll split when he's had his porridge."

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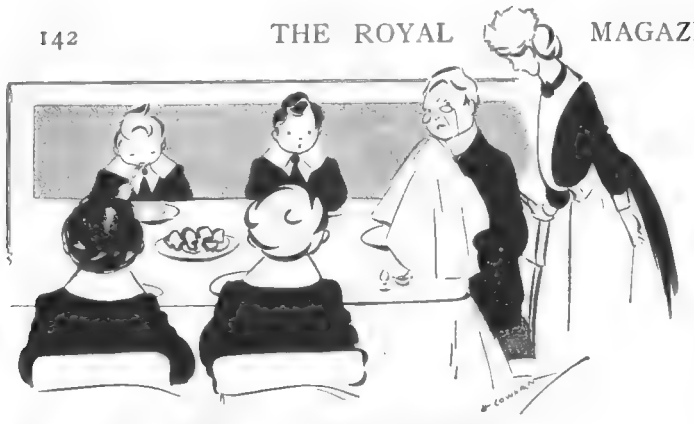

I saw one of the servants go up and speak to Grey.

"D'you know where I left his shirt when I'd done borrowing it?"

"I don't think much of the fit of that borrowed jacket."

"He slept like a log."

And so on.

In the middle of breakfast I saw one of the servants go up and speak to Grey, the head prefect of our house, who sits at the head of the table to keep order. Then Grey got up and went out. Of course, our table broke out into a buzz of talk, but we kept an eye on the door for developments. After a minute Grey came back, bringing with him a figure in a nightshirt, with a folded sheet round its waist like a petticoat. It was Banister.

"Go and get your breakfast," he said, "we'll talk about it afterwards. Now, silence all of you."

So Banister came and sat down in his place at our table, looking as fatuous as a guy.

He simply glared at us all the while he was eating, but he didn't dare to speak, and, of course, we didn't speak to him. I thought he would have choked with rage and fried bacon.

When we'd done, Grey came over to the table and stopped us going out.

"Now," he said to Banister, "what's the meaning of this foolery? Speak up!"

I saw the tale rising to Banister's lips, and I fixed him steadily with my eye. The meaning in my face must have been quite clear, for he said falteringly:

"Please, Grey, I lent all my things to the other fellows in my dormitory, and I found I hadn't anything to put on."

That was the only time I ever saw Grey really puzzled.

"You silly young ass," he said.

"Now, all you kids, give him back his togs in two shakes, or I'll hammer the lot of you. As for you, young Banister, if ever I find you lending anything again, or borrowing it either, it'll be the worse for you. Off you go, all of you, or you'll be late."

So we went up into the dormitory, and gave him his togs, and put on our own, which we'd hidden. We gave him something else, too, but not a quarter of what he would have got if he'd given us away.

He has taken very good care ever since to follow the advice Grey gave him.

We went up to the dormitory and gave him his togs.

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THE GOLDEN GOOSE

A Christmas Story.

By C. Malcolm Hincks.

When Mr. James How had stood in the dock and heard the judge sentence him to twelve months' hard labour, he had made a rapid mental calculation and discovered with no little pleasure that, all going well, he would be released on the morning of Christmas Eve.

Arithmetic had always been Mr. How's strong point, and, his calculation proving correct, he left the dreary prison at Winhampton (the town where his unconventional views on Self-Help had received a temporary check) at nine o'clock on the morning of the day preceding the great festival of Christmas.

It was a raw, cold morning, and Mr. How shivered as he buttoned his shabby overcoat round him and set off briskly for the station. His soft felt hat, worn extremely low to hide his closely-cropped head, came well over his forehead, showing little of his keen, clean-shaven face and small, cunning eyes.

He had the sum of thirty shillings in his pocket, and was anxious to get to London, where he thought there might be an opportunity of increasing that sum before nightfall. He stopped at a small tobacconist's shop and bought some cigarettes, one of which he puffed with relish as he continued his walk.

His ticket cost him five shillings, and then, discovering that he had nearly half-an-hour to wait for a train, he modestly retired to the waiting-room and buried himself behind the paper he had thoughtfully purchased at the bookstall.

The train glided in, and Mr. How hastened across the platform and jumped into an empty third-class smoking compartment. He settled himself down comfortably and waved an ironic farewell to Winhampton as the train began to move slowly out of the station.

Then, suddenly, a porter hastily flung open the door, caught a panting old man's arm and assisted him on to the footboard, another grinning porter running along behind gave him a violent push in the rear, and the old man stumbled into the carriage with a bag in each hand, and sank into a seat gasping for breath, a look of terrified surprise on his fat, good-humoured face.

"Aye, but that was a close thing," he gasped, when he had sufficiently recovered his breath.

Mr. How, disinclined to talk, muttered that it was, and began to unfold his paper.

"I be goin' to Lunnon," said the old man, as he carefully placed his bags on the rack, "are you goin' there?"

"Yes," said the ex-convict shortly.

"Then that's all right. I allus goes to sleep in a train, then the journey don't seem

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so long. You might jest kick me w'en we're gettin' near Waterloo, will you?"

Mr. How ungraciously expressed himself willing to perform that slight service and retired behind his paper.

The portly old man, apparently a prosperous farmer, took off his hat, and wiped his brow with a glaring red handkerchief. Then he unbuttoned his overcoat and the jacket beneath, threw them back, took three deep breaths, placed his feet on the seat opposite, and composed himself to slumber.

A daily paper was a new experience for Mr. How, and he read it carefully for about half-an-hour; then, getting tired of it, he placed it on the seat beside him and idly glanced across at his travelling companion.

His precarious calling had made him a man of quick observation and a good judge of men. Some time ago he had decided that the farmer was coming to London for Christmas, and as his eyes became intently fixed on the breast pocket of the open coat, and he caught a glimpse of a bulky pocket-case, he came to the conclusion that the visitor was not devoid of funds to procure enjoyment.

Mr. How's careless indifference at once changed to a very great interest; his cunning little eyes gleamed, and he edged cautiously towards the sleeping man in the opposite corner.

The next stop was at a junction some twenty odd miles from London, and from there the train ran without a stop to Waterloo. Supposing he could obtain the money from the pocket-case, and the old man still slept on, he could quietly alight at the junction, change carriages, and slip away hurriedly at Waterloo.

The hasty plan commended itself to him, and he stole up by degrees to the side of his intended victim.

The old man was sleeping heavily.

With a gentle, quick jerk Mr. How had the pocket-case in his hands, and the next instant he was back in his seat again innocently gazing out of the window.

The old man slept on.

His Majesty's late guest, with his back towards the owner of the money, carefully examined the contents of the pocket-case; one side was filled with letters and other things of no value to him, the other contained four five-pound notes and a couple of sovereigns.

He crammed the notes into a side pocket of his jacket, then held the sovereigns in the palm of his hand hesitatingly.

"Seems a bit rough to leave him broke," he muttered, "Christmas, too. No, 'ang me, I'll be a bloomin' Santa Claus to 'im: I'll leave 'im the quids. It's sheer robbin' of myself, but I allus was a soft-'earted bloke."

With a benign smile at his great generosity, Mr. How slipped the sovereigns into the pocket-case. Then, with caution, he restored the latter to its rightful owner, who was still sleeping the sleep of the just.

"Now, if 'e wakes up and looks for 'is boodle 'e'll think it all safe," he murmured complacently, as he again resumed his seat and picked up the paper.

About a quarter of an hour later the train began to slow down, and Mr. How made preparations for a hasty exit as soon as it stopped.

With a grinding of brakes the train came to a stop at the junction, and the ex-convict rose to his feet. Then the door opened and a little Cockney with a loud voice and, if possible, a "louder" check suit, got one foot on the step. He held a goose in each hand.

"Yus, thankee, I must say you——"

"Excuse me," said Mr. How hastily, "I want to——"

"No 'urry, guv'nor. You can tell the missus, Dick, as 'ow that——"

"Confound you, let me get out."

"All right; keep your 'air on. I was only——"

But Mr. How's angry outburst had awakened the farmer.

"I say, mister," he chimed in, "you'll miss the train if you get out now."

Mr. How glared at the unsuspicious Cockney, who still blocked the doorway.

"I think there's just time for a drink," he suggested weakly.

"No there bean't," said the farmer wisely. "I remember once I—" Just then the guard passed, glancing impatiently at his watch. "I say," howled the farmer over the Cockney's head. "Be there time for this gentleman to get a drink, guard?"

"No, there isn't," said that official shortly. Then, stepping up to the door: "Now, then, if you're going by this train get in. If you ain't say so, and get out of the way."

"All right," murmured the aggrieved Cockney, stepping into the carriage, "I reckon some folks got outer bed the wrong side this morning. What's the——"

"Right away!" cried the guard sharply; his green flag waved wildly for an instant, and then the train began to move. The

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As for the ex-convict, he sat back with rage in his heart.

farmer sank back into his corner and closed his eyes again, the Cockney placed the two geese on the seat next to Mr. How and spread himself out comfortably opposite.

As for the ex-convict, he sat back with rage in his heart, and in order to avoid a scene stared out of the window. He knew that to have alighted at the junction under the circumstances would have been madness; his exit would have attracted attention, and the authorities at Winhampton having inconveniently good memories, any trouble in London would probably have meant his arrest.

His position was an awkward one. At any moment the farmer might wake up and go to his pocket-case; he had noticed a carefully-marked time-table there which the old man might want to consult. Mr. How was no fighter; he knew if the farmer insisted on searching him he would have to submit to that indignity. Then——

Mr. How furtively glared across at the Cockney and ground his teeth. It was the little fool opposite who had spoilt his plans.

If he could only get rid of the notes!

His eyes, wandering listlessly round the carriage, fell upon the two geese by his side, both of them fine birds, plucked and trussed ready for cooking; he eyed them carelessly, thinking they would make a good Christmas dinner. But the Cockney opposite was not a man who slept on a railway journey.

Then, like a flash, Mr. James How had a brilliant idea. Something he had once heard from a dear friend, who was answering for his many sins in a penal servitude establishment on the moors of Devonshire, occurred to him, and his whole manner changed.

The owner of the geese was puffing contentedly at a short clay pipe. Mr. How produced a cigarette, fumbled through his pockets, and then swore gently.

The Cockney was touched.

"'Ave a light?" he suggested with an air of forgiveness, holding out his pipe.

"Thankee," murmured Mr. How, delighted

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Mr. How ran out into the street still clutching the goose.

at the success of his ruse; then, as the red gleamed at the end of his cigarette, he said enviously: "Fine pair o' birds you've got."

"Yus, all right, guv'nor; but they wasn't what I was wantin'. Bin dahn to see my cousin, ter wish 'im a 'appy Chris'mas; thought 'e'd stump up a bit, but 'e give me these, an' the missus 'as bin an' bought a turkey."

"That's rotten," said Mr. How sympathetically. "'Owever, I much prefer goose to turkey any day. You ain't inclined to sell one of 'em, I suppose?"

The Cockney became at once deeply interested; he shifted along the seat and leant forward.

"I wouldn't mind sellin' 'em both," he said, and then added cautiously, "at a fair price."

Mr. How laughed.

"Don't want 'em both," he said; "one would do for me an' the wife. How much would you take for this one?"

He placed his hand on the bird nearest him and strove to disguise any eagerness in his voice.

"Ten shillings," was the prompt reply.

"Oh, don't come it," said Mr. How. "I'll give you five, and then you're doin' well."

And after a somewhat heated discussion the goose changed hands at that amount.

The ex-convict, with hands that trembled slightly, took the bird on his knee and began to examine it carefully. Presently he looked up.

"Seen the paper?" he queried, holding his journal forth.

"No, not proper. Thankee."

The little Cockney spread it out carefully, and soon became immersed in its contents.

The farmer was snoring loudly.

With cool deliberation Mr. How took a knife from his pocket and inserted it in the breast of the goose. Less than three minutes later the four bank notes, carefully folded, were reposing in the interior of the carcase, and the goose was back in its old place by the side of its dead companion, while Mr. How was taking a great interest in the suburban district through which they were running.

The farmer's voice recalled him to his present surroundings.

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"I quite meant to bring one up for Liza," said the portly one, "but I came away without it. I'll give you six shillings for it."

Turning hastily, he saw the Cockney holding the other goose under the farmer's nose.

"Righto," said the owner.

Mr. How breathed hard. If the farmer went to his pocket-case for the money there would be a scene, and although feeling fairly secure he disliked publicity. Once again he glared angrily at the little man opposite.

But it was all right. The portly agriculturist took the silver from his trousers pockets, then rose and carefully placed the bird on the rack with his other belongings.

He had hardly done so before the train began to slacken speed, and Mr. How suddenly remembered that all trains on that line stopped at Vauxhall, the station before Waterloo, for tickets to be collected.

He drew his goose towards him, wondering slightly why he had put it so far away from him, and as the train came to a stop he opened the door.

"Thought you was goin' to Lunnon!" said the farmer.

"This is London, South London; I live near here," said Mr. How promptly. "You're going to Waterloo, aren't you?"

The farmer took his ticket from his waistcoat pocket as though to be certain.

"Yes, that's it," he said slowly. "W-A-T-E-R-L-O-O—Waterloo, that's Lunnon proper; then I takes a 'bus to——"

"Good-day," said Mr. How cheerfully, as he alighted. "Merry Chris'mas to both of you."

He did not wait to hear their reply, but, holding the goose carefully, he hurried along the platform and heaved a sigh of relief when he was clear of the station.

He walked rapidly towards Westminster Bridge, and then, after about a quarter of an hour, feeling all was safe, he entered the saloon bar of a large public-house. It was now about twelve o'clock and the bar was comparatively deserted. He ordered a drink, and, securing it, promptly made for a quiet corner to withdraw the money from the goose.

It was foggy in town that Christmas eve, and as he looked at the goose under the electric light a sudden chill went to his heart—he could not see the cut he had made, and yet he distinctly remembered where he had made it.

* * * * *

Five minutes later, assisted by a burly potman, Mr. How ran out into the street, still clutching the goose and saying things that turned even the hardened ejector pale.

It was not until he was half-way across Westminster Bridge that he realised that the little Cockney, taking advantage of his abstraction, had sold the farmer the plumper goose of the two, the one which he had honestly purchased.

If he had only taken the two sovereigns as well!

The thought maddened him, and his language as he approached a cheap lodging house in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane was almost sufficient to impart an August atmosphere to the dreary scene.

But the surprise and disgust of Mr. James How was nothing to the surprise and pleasure of Farmer Jackson when his niece discovered the missing five-pound notes when she commenced to stuff the goose on Christmas morning.

AT TWILIGHT.

Behind the woodlands fades the sunset glow,
And the first stars shine faintly in the skies;
Veiled and mysterious in the twilight, lo!
The landscape lies!

And where the lane with elder-flower is white,
A fond and whispering couple; I surmise
The old, old story! . . . in the fading light
The lover lies!

R. Mertun.

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Survivors' Tales Of Great Events

General Adolphus W. Greely.

No. XLVII.—FACING DEATH IN THE ARCTIC.

From the Narrative of General Adolphus W. Greely, United States Army.

As Told to Walter Wood.

In the summer of 1881, Lieutenant, now General, Greely, commanding an expedition of twenty-three persons, left St. John's, Newfoundland, for the Polar Seas to make scientific observations on behalf of the United States' Government. For three years the party remained in the Arctic, enduring such terrible sufferings that seventeen members of the expedition were starved to death. A reward of five thousand pounds was offered for the discovery of Lieutenant Greely and his party, and the British Government presented the *Alert* to help in the search. The survivors, when actually dying, were found by Commander Winfield S. Schley, and reached St. John's on July 17th, 1884, three years after the expedition had left that port. General Greely retired from the American army recently, after forty-seven years' service, and is now making a tour round the world in the company of Mrs. Greely, who so long and bravely awaited his return.

I am a man of practically no regrets, and never say that I wish a thing could have been done better, or that I could have done this or that. I am always intensely interested in what is to take place to-day or to-morrow, or next week, and not in what happened yesterday, or last week, or in the past generally.

That, I think, is perhaps the best answer I can give you when you ask me what the impression is that has been left upon my mind by my three years in the Arctic, when, in very truth, I was face to face with death. Those years are numbered with things past, and it is natural that one should wish to let them rest. But you press the point, and say that people like to know what feeling is uppermost in the mind of one who has survived adventures like my own in Polar regions.

Well, then, I will tell you. It is this: The thing which stands out most vividly in my mind, when I look back on the dark and dreadful months that have become sombre and solemn memories, is the fidelity to duty and the loyalty to country of the men who were under my command, and of the brave and uncomplaining way in which men will face a lingering and awful death when they believe that there is a "square deal" all round. A "square deal" was what I aimed at in carrying out my task, and my men knew it and did their best. Men cannot do more.

After all, men are more affected by humane consideration than in any other way, and that was my method of treatment with the remarkable band who went with me to the Arctic, and most of whom are there still. They bore their trials with marvellous fortitude, animated by that spirit which I saw again, on a vaster scale, in San Francisco when the earthquake came.

For eleven consecutive days I was charged with the responsibility of feeding a quarter of a million people a day. In the two and a half months that the city was under my control, I never saw a woman cry or heard a man complain, yet two hundred thousand people in San Francisco had rushed out of their houses with almost nothing on except their night clothes, and with no earthly possessions save those which they could snatch up as they fled. They were homeless, many of them were ruined, yet, as I say, not one of them complained.

Just that courage bore my own men through their long and dreadful sufferings in the frozen north.

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I began my military career in the volunteer army as a private soldier. I was the first volunteer in the army of two million men to reach the grade of a general officer in the Regular Army of the United States. I was first lieutenant in the Fifth Cavalry when I was appointed to the command of the expeditionary force which sailed in the *Proteus* to establish a station north of the eighty-first degree of north latitude, to carry out scientific observations.

I was bound for Lady Franklin Bay, and from blue sky and glorious sunshine I drove out into heavy gales and dense fogs until the bleak and icy shores of Greenland rose before me. Very soon we were driving our gallant little ship, the *Proteus*, into and through the ice-packs. Her iron prow crunched and crashed against the obstruction, sometimes with such resistless force that she would run her whole length along the ice, the men meanwhile getting her on the roll, to crush the ice alongside and prevent it from nipping her. She was a brave little barquentine-rigged oak steamer of 467 tons register and 110 horse-power, nearly new, and built originally for the sealing trade. She had compound engines, a self-lifting screw, carried a spare rudder and propeller, had an iron prow, and was sheathed with ironwood. Her captain and crew were men who knew exactly what the perils of the icy seas were.

The members of my own party had been specially selected. We were in the prime of youthful manhood, and a commander never sailed with a more loyal and enthusiastic band. Falling away there was, in the fulness of time, in one or two directions, but that was inevitable in view of the unexpected and dreadful sufferings which befel us. There was myself, Second-lieutenant Kislingbury, Second-lieutenant Lockwood, Dr. Pavy, eight sergeants, four corporals, and nine privates. All of us, with the exception of Dr. Pavy, belonged to the United States' Army.

The expedition was organised and sent off in spite of many serious difficulties; but when it sailed our hearts were light and our enthusiasm great. The party was to be taken in the *Proteus* to Lady Franklin Bay, and establish quarters there. Then the ship was to return, and a steamer was to visit the station yearly with the supplies and recruits needful for the continuance of the expedition's work.

All my officers and men were volunteers, and were specially fitted, physically and mentally, for the dangerous and trying work which it was known was before us; but not one amongst us could foresee the perils through which we had to go.

It was the time of perpetual daylight when we entered the Polar region, and by the end of August we had landed and were making ready for the long and dreary Arctic night. Only those who have taken part in Polar expeditions can fully understand what it means to endure the terrible monotony of the life, and realise what ceaseless efforts are essential to the welfare of a party; they only can comprehend to the full what it means to bear the privations which destroyed two-thirds of the members of the expedition, and left one or two of the survivors cripples for life.

But the doom did not overtake us all at once. There was in the beginning the freshness, the adventure, the work, to keep us occupied and in health.

The *Proteus* went away when we landed our stores at the winter quarters established by the *Discovery* in 1875 and 1876, and we made ready to settle for the winter in our headquarters at Fort Conger. I watched the ship disappear round the point which is known as Distant Cape, hoping and believing, as she steamed out to sea in the solemn evening, that I should see her again when she returned. She did come back, nearly two years later, to rescue us from the position of peril in which we were then placed at Fort Conger; but the fate befel her from which she had so often escaped. She was nipped in the ice and foundered, but all on board were saved.

That little statement bridges me over a wide gulf of time, to the beginning, indeed, of the period when ordinary human interest in my doings in the Arctic will begin.

For two years I and my people had been in the Polar regions, carrying out faithfully and resolutely the instructions of the Government. I had done my best, and with one or two rare exceptions my people had done theirs. We had gone through two winters of unparalleled cold and darkness — cold so intense that brandy and mercury froze solid, nitric acid went like lard, and the very breath of us, rising in the air like steam, descended in little showers of snow. The skin of our faces changed colour and became a sickly yellowish green.

For just under nine months the sun had never been seen; yet during the two winters my party had accomplished amazing things.

I had conquered the record which England had held for three hundred years, because

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my explorations had taken me farther north than man had ever yet penetrated, and had enabled me to add to the coast of Greenland more than a hundred miles of shore which had never been visited by human beings.

My sledge parties had journeyed in all more than three thousand miles over icy hills and snowy plains, absent at times for sixty days. More than five hundred observations had been made and recorded, and there had been incessant labour in keeping up the spirits and maintaining the strength of the members of the expedition.

Yet, in spite of the perils and privations of the undertaking, I was still able proudly to say that I had not lost a life, and that my party had scarcely suffered from illness in any shape or form.

Then from victory I passed to retreat.

With heavy yet hopeful hearts we said farewell to the place which had been our home and headquarters for two years, leaving our faithful dogs to look after themselves, but opening some barrels of beef, bread, pork, and seal blubber so that, irrespective of what they could hunt for themselves, they could maintain life for several months. I wished them to live, in case I should be forced to return to Conger, in which event they would be necessary for hauling purposes. On August 9th, I abandoned Conger in a launch which Lieutenant Lockwood had christened *Lady Greely*, and two boats which she had in tow—all three very deeply laden with ourselves, our sledges, alcohol for fuel, four rifles, two shot-guns, and as much ammunition and as many medical stores as we could accommodate. Personal effects were reduced to a minimum.

We had, to the best of our ability, fulfilled our duty. The efforts to reach and relieve us had failed; now it was for me to get my people, if I could, out of danger and into safety. The party then numbered twenty-five, and all was well. Nine were in the launch, and the rest were divided amongst the boats —a whaleboat, an English ice-boat, and a jolly-boat. There was a fourth and small boat, which I took because it was easily handled by one man, and was useful for general work, either in the open water or amongst the ice. I had forty days' full rations, and my sledge parties had provided more than twenty additional days' supplies at a point between Capes Baird and Collinson.

I led my party out and away, the launch towing the boats, and all going towards the south, retreating, as we believed, to safety, and making for the spot where the relief steamers would find us. A gale had been blowing, and it was into the light of the midnight sun, into water which was lashed by storm and dangerously infested with grinding ice-packs and heavy ice-floes that the *Lady Greely* steamed, with her deeply-laden boats in tow.

It was well that we did not know what was in store for us, well that we were unaware of the loss of the *Proteus*, better still that we were ignorant of the fact that that very day her consort, the other ship which had been sent to our rescue, was steaming south and into safety, carrying with her food and stores which would have meant complete salvation for us. It was well indeed that we did not know that we were plunging into a third Arctic winter, by comparison with which the other two were mild and harmless.

How is it possible, in a few words, to tell you what was meant by that retreat? How can the worry and the hardships of the undertaking be indicated, and how can I describe the irritations and the drawbacks? Within a week I had to punish the engineer for insubordination—misconduct which I found was due to intoxication caused by drinking our precious fuel alcohol by stealth! The alcohol was used for cooking, and its preservation was of vital urgency.

It was August—twenty-five years to the very day on which we are now talking—yet so bitter was the north wind that we were all numbed with cold, and I ordered half a gill of rum to be served to each man to warm and cheer him.

So heavily charged by the dangerous floating ice were we that a few days after leaving Conger I ordered the smallest of our boats to be broken up. The launch, too, was nearly smashed by being nipped in the floating masses, which, while not dangerous to big ships, were deadly when they came in contact with little boats.

From day to day, through strong, bitter winds, fog, snow, and ice, we struggled on, sometimes drifting with the swiftly moving tides, either in company or separately, for three hundred miles. Then we were safe in harbour, within sight of the spot at which the *Proteus* had foundered only a few weeks previously, although we were ignorant of her proximity and loss.

Then the ice beset and held us in its ruthless grip, and there was not one amongst us who did not at last begin to realise that the chances of escape were small, and that we were confronted with the terrible probability, almost certainty, of a lingering death by

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As a forlorn hope I abandoned the launch on the solid sea. . . . The boats were put on sledges and we dragged them over the lumpy, shifting ice.

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starvation. Only by exercise was it possible to keep warmth in our bodies.

At that time my stock of provisions could, with care, be made to last for sixty days. I offered half a gill of rum as a reward for every article of game brought in by two Eskimos named Jens and Christiansen, who had joined the expedition soon after I reached the Arctic, and had proved faithful and devoted fellows. They brought in seals, walruses and anything they could hunt or catch; and we ate them. It is strange how soon necessity will turn loathing to liking.

For fifteen days we were frozen in the ice, drifting with it; then, as a forlorn hope, I abandoned the launch on the solid sea, taking two boats and all provisions, and making for the shore. The boats were put on sledges, and we dragged them over the lumpy, shifting ice, getting them from floe to floe as best we could.

Bitter gales, incessant privation, dwindling stores, minor illnesses, all these were endured; yet the safety of the shore was gained at last; and Cape Sabine was reached after travelling four hundred miles by the boats, of which a hundred were covered by sledge and boat in combination.

I had effected my retreat from Conger, and had taken more than fifty days to do the toilsome journey.

We went into winter quarters again—this time a hut made by raising walls of such stones as we could find, and lashing a boat on oars, which served as rafters. The boat was the roof, and under it we huddled and slept in our sleeping bags, utterly famished and miserable. Every scrap of food that could be got, however bad it might prove to be, was ravened; every animal that was shot or caught was hailed with joy. One day a blue fox got its head into an empty meat can, and one of the men killed it with a blow of his fist. The animal was a welcome help to the terribly lean larder.

We were ceaselessly hungry, yet the daily ration had to be reduced. We had been helped to some extent by finding stores which had been left in known places by previous explorers, but these were no longer available, and we had to settle down to face the fatal winter as best we could. If, when the *Proteus* sank and her consort sailed back home because the commander believed that our relief was impossible, another ship had been dispatched, I believe that we could have been rescued from our peril, and that the whole of the party would have been saved.

Winter, pitiless, piercing, dark both day and night, gripped us again. While we were still fairly strong and well I ordered all the damaged stores to be used, and rotten biscuit and mouldy bread were greedily devoured, with fox flesh, seal flesh, and blubber as food. Blubber was eaten—and it was also used for lighting the wretched, miserable hut by dipping a bit of rag in it. So desperate was our plight, so precious became food of any sort, that even blubber was grudged for illumination. It was thought better to keep it for food, and sit in darkness. But I knew that the best plan was to try to give an air of cheerfulness to the everlasting darkness. Remember, the Arctic night on which we had entered the third time would continue for nearly four months.

The sun returned at last, seen again after an absence of a hundred and fifty-two days. We had huddled in our gloomy, stifling, squalid, miserable hut, with our rations swiftly lessening. For the sake of warmth we slept two or three together in the sleeping bags, which often enough were frozen solid. Sometimes they were so hard that it was impossible for us, in our weakened and emaciated state, to get into them, and we had to rest con ent with partially entering them.

Death seemed certain now, but we struggled on, dreading not the end of the journey, but the prolonged suffering by which the goal was reached. One man had lost his feet by frost bite, and the time came when both his hands went, too. Other members of the party were weak and ill; yet it was not possible to do much more than show kindness. We talked calmly of death, and I encouraged my men to meet it bravely, telling them repeatedly the story of the *Birkenhead*. We were hungry all the time; we talked constantly of food, dwelt on the good things we had eaten in the past, and drew up imaginary menus.

Still that wonderful spirit of which I have spoken kept us up, although even I had turned and said to my companion in the sleeping-bag: "How have we passed through all this horror and kept our reason?"

There had been grumblings and acts of insubordination; then there came a worse thing—the discovery of a thief amongst us, a man who had so far forgotten what was due to the common welfare that he had stolen food. It seems pitiful to talk of theft, and such food, too; but paltry as it was, it meant our lives.

The thief, Henry, was warned, and being a soldier, under military discipline, he knew

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He was executed early that afternoon.

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what the inevitable end must be if he persisted in his crime.

The first man to die of starvation was Sergeant Cross.

We sewed him up in sacks and canvas, and he was dragged on the sledge to a hill top, and laid to rest in a shallow grave, fifteen inches deep, in the frozen earth. The men were too weak and their tools too imperfect to enable them to dig deeper. Cross died on January 18th; but it was not till April had come that the real end was reached. We had then three pounds of bread, five of meat, and about two of stearine per man, with shrimps that were brought in daily. On the 5th of the month Christiansen, one of the Eskimos, died, delirious; on the following day, Sunday, Sergeant Lynn died, craving for water, of which we had none to give.

I read the Burial Service over him in the hut, and then the body was dragged on the sledge to the little cemetery on the hill.

The brave Sergeant Rice, who, not knowing that his sleeping-comrade Lynn was dead, crept into the bag and slept with him a little while before he knew what had happened, perished in the snow three days after. He and Private Frederick had gone away to try to recover a hundred pounds of English beef which had been abandoned in the winter of 1883.

For twenty-two hours, cramped in their sleeping-bag, they suffered in a dreadful storm which buried them in snow. Rice died in his comrade's arms, and Frederick, before he returned to us, made his last resting-place in the snow.

On that sorrowful day, too, the gallant, steadfast, true Christian, Lieutenant Lockwood, passed away. The last words he wrote showed kind and gentle thought for a dying companion, Sergeant Jewell, who, on the 12th, became unconscious in my arms, and went peacefully to sleep for ever. All who perished, after such prolonged and dreadful suffering, died calmly and resignedly.

Even the shadow of death was brightened, for on the Easter Sunday a little snow bird, the herald of spring, passed over our pitiful hut, and we listened breathlessly to his chirping. His coming gladdened our hearts and filled us with hope—a hope that was realised, for within two days a young bear had been shot, giving us four hundred pounds of dressed meat, and a small seal added sixty.

Drowning claimed a victim on the 29th, when Jens the Eskimo lost his life in hunting a seal.

For two and a half years I had kept my party together, in spite of incredible privations, without serious illness, and free from death; now, in less than a month, half-a-dozen brave souls had gone to rest.

Starvation was held at bay for six weeks more; then it caused the death of Private Ellis. Five days later Sergeant Ralston died soon after midnight, and for four hours I remained in the sleeping-bag with the corpse until its coldness drove me out. Private Whisler died next day. They were buried by the survivors who were strong enough to move. Three days afterwards death took Sergeant Israel, our astronomer.

May had claimed four more of us, leaving fourteen survivors who looked for nothing, hoped for nothing, but an early death.

The 1st of June brought summer, ushered in by a bitter driving snowstorm.

Lieutenant Kislingbury sang the Doxology, craved for water—and died. Corporal Salor perished on the 3rd. I read the Burial Service over both of them; but there was no one strong enough to bury Salor, and he was left outside on the ice.

Now comes a happening which although more dreadful and dramatic than any of the other incidents, was essential to the salvation of the survivors.

Private Henry, time after time, had been detected in the act of theft—stealing the provisions, although the party was at the very gates of death. He had been pardoned frequently, and told in definite terms what the result of a repetition of his offence must be.

I issued a written order to Sergeants Brainard, Frederick, and Long, saying that if he was again found out he was to be shot at once.

The very next day Sergeant Frederick caught Henry stealing shrimps out of the general mess-pot, and I myself discovered him after further thefts. He admitted his guilt, boldly, fearlessly, and without an expression of regret.

Again I issued an order, this time stating that Henry, in spite of his promises, had repeated his offence. "This pertinacity and audacity," I said, "are the destruction of this party if not at once ended. Private Henry will be shot to-day, all care being taken to prevent his injuring anyone, as his physical strength is greater than that of any two men. Decide the manner of his death by two ball and one blank cartridge."

He was executed early that afternoon, on my own responsibility entirely, and I ordered

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that he should die simply that the rest might live.

The survivors, without exception, acknowledged the justice of his doom; and, later, the War Department not only declared that it entertained no doubt of the entire propriety of my action, but also added that it did not think, that in the public interests, a court of inquiry was necessary.

I still maintain that the execution was imperative.

With dreadful swiftness the end came.

That very day of the execution Private Bender died in the early evening. A few minutes later Dr. Pavy passed away. Again I read the Burial Service, and the bodies were taken a short distance away.

On the following day we were eating leather thongs, boot soles, lashings—anything that could be chewed, for at last our food was finished, except a few shrimps and such things as reindeer-moss.

By sheer force of will Sergeant Gardiner had lived for at least two months. He died, holding in his hands pictures of the two women whom he loved best, and murmuring with his last breath: "Mother! Wife!" He was carried to an ice-crack, and that was his burial. There was not strength enough left amongst us to take him elsewhere or to put him in the ground.

I celebrated my sixth wedding anniversary on the 20th of that black month of June, three years after my expedition had sailed—and in the pitiless Polar region I was asking myself: "When will this life in death end?"

Three days later I heard the whistle of the *Thetis*, Captain Schley's relief ship. It was a signal to recall his parties who were looking for us.

Then, with all the feeble strength which was left in our worn-out bodies, we raised a last appeal for help. At first it was not heard.

Once more, and finally, we resigned ourself to death—but we had been found.

Death had given place to victory, and the wretched remnant of the expedition had been saved.

The tragedy of nine months' ceaseless suffering, starvation, and death was ended.

A third of us had been snatched from the brink of the grave itself.

A STORY BY CONAN DOYLE.

In the world of fiction few names are better known than that of Conan Doyle. As a writer of tales of mystery he has no equal, and anything published under his name is always worth reading.

The Editor of THE NOVEL MAGAZINE is pleased to announce that he has just secured for publication a powerful serial story from Conan Doyle's pen. The title of this story is "The Mystery of Cloomber," and it is a story to read and read again. It was originally written about the time of the first Sherlock Holmes stories, but saw the light in such a fashion that it will certainly be new to nearly everyone.

The opening chapters appear in the December issue of THE NOVEL MAGAZINE, which will be obtainable on December 1st, price fourpence. But you are advised to order your copies in advance that you may be sure of having one when publishing day comes.

Remember these three things:

The MAGAZINE is THE NOVEL.

The DATE is DECEMBER 1st.

The PRICE is FOURPENCE.

Give your order TO-DAY.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

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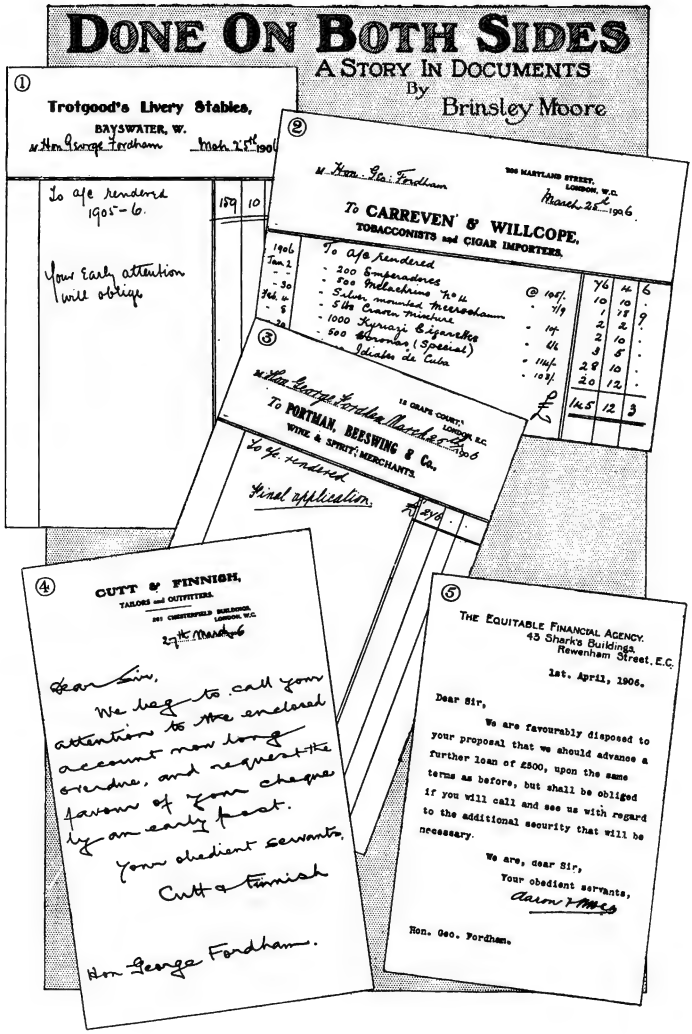
DONE ON BOTH SIDES
A STORY IN DOCUMENTS
By
Brinsley Moore
①
Trotgood's Livery Stables,
BAYSWATER, W.
M Hon George Fordham
To a/c rendered
1905-6.
Your early attention will oblige
②
M Hon. Geo. Fordham
To CARREVEN & WILLCOPE,
TOBACCONISTS and CIGAR IMPORTERS.
To a/c rendered
③
To PORTMAN, BEESWING & Co.
WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANTS.
To a/c rendered
Final application.
④
CUTT & FINNISH,
TAILORS and OUTFITTERS.
Dear Sir,
We beg to call your attention to the enclosed account now long overdue, and request the favour of your cheque by an early post.
Your obedient servants,
Cutt & Finnish
Hon George Fordham.
⑤
THE EQUITABLE FINANCIAL AGENCY.
45 Sharke Buildings,
Newenham Street, E.C.
1st. April, 1906.
Dear Sir,
We are favourably disposed to your proposal that we should advance a further loan of £500, upon the same terms as before, but shall be obliged if you will call and see us with regard to the additional security that will be necessary.
We are, dear Sir,
Your obedient servants,
Hon. Geo. Fordham.

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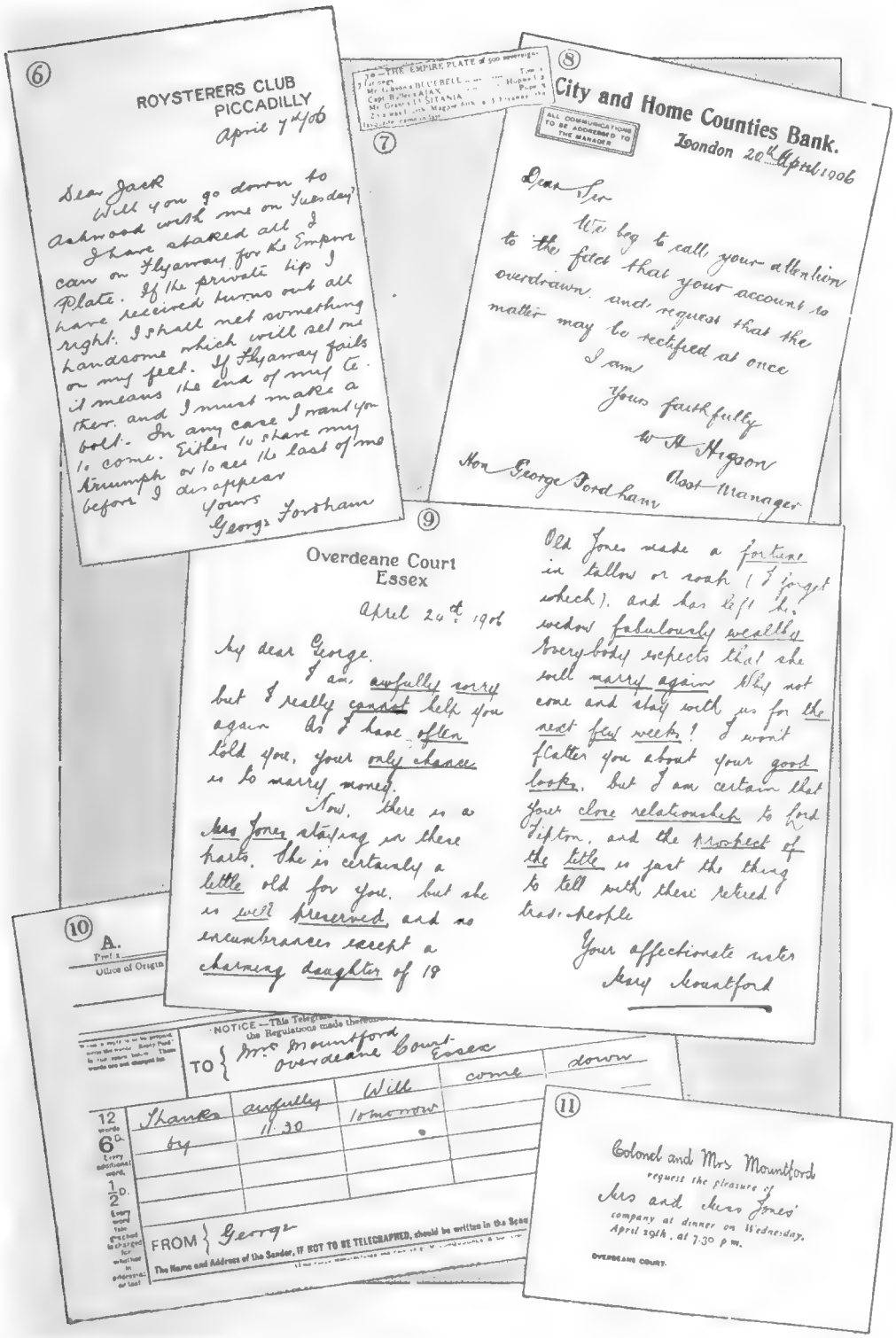

⑥

ROYSTERERS CLUB
PICCADILLY
April 7th/06

Dear Jack
Will you go down to Ashwood with me on Tuesday? I have staked all I can on Flyaway for the Empire Plate. If the private tip I have received turns out all right. I shall net something handsome which will set me on my feet. If Flyaway fails it means the end of my career. and I must make a bolt. In any case I want you to come. Either to share my triumph or to see the last of me before I disappear
Yours
George Fortham

THE EMPIRE PLATE of 500 sovereigns

⑦

⑧

City and Home Counties Bank.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE MANAGER

London 20th April 1906

Dear Sir
We beg to call your attention to the fact that your account is overdrawn and request that the matter may be rectified at once
I am
Yours faithfully
W. H. Higson
Asst Manager

Hon George Fordham

⑨

Overdeane Court
Essex

April 24th 1906

My dear George.
I am awfully sorry but I really cannot help you again As I have often told you, your only chance is to marry money.
Now, there is a Mrs Jones staying in the house. She is certainly a little old for you, but she is well preserved, and no encumbrances except a charming daughter of 18

Old Jones made a fortune in tallow or soap (I forget which), and has left his widow fabulously wealthy Everybody expects that she will marry again Why not come and stay with us for the next few weeks! I won't flatter you about your good looks, but I am certain that your close relationship to Lord Tipton, and the prospect of the title is just the thing to tell with these retired business people

Your affectionate sister
Mary Mountford

⑩

A.

Office of Origin

NOTICE.—This Telegram is subject to the Regulations made thereunder

TO { Mrs Mountford Overdeane Court Essex

Thanks	awfully	Will	come down
by	11.30	tomorrow	

12 words 6d. Every additional word, ½d.

FROM { George

The Name and Address of the Sender, IF NOT TO BE TELEGRAPHED, should be written in the Space

⑪

Colonel and Mrs Mountford
request the pleasure of
Mrs and Miss Jones'
company at dinner on Wednesday,
April 29th, at 7.30 p.m.

OVERDEANE COURT.

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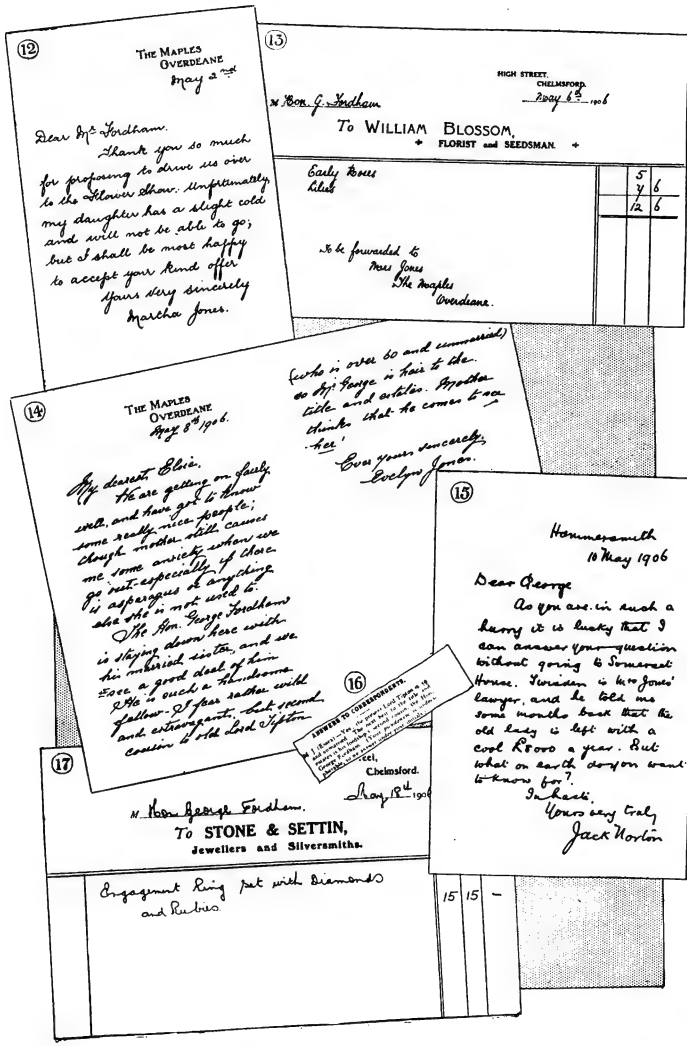

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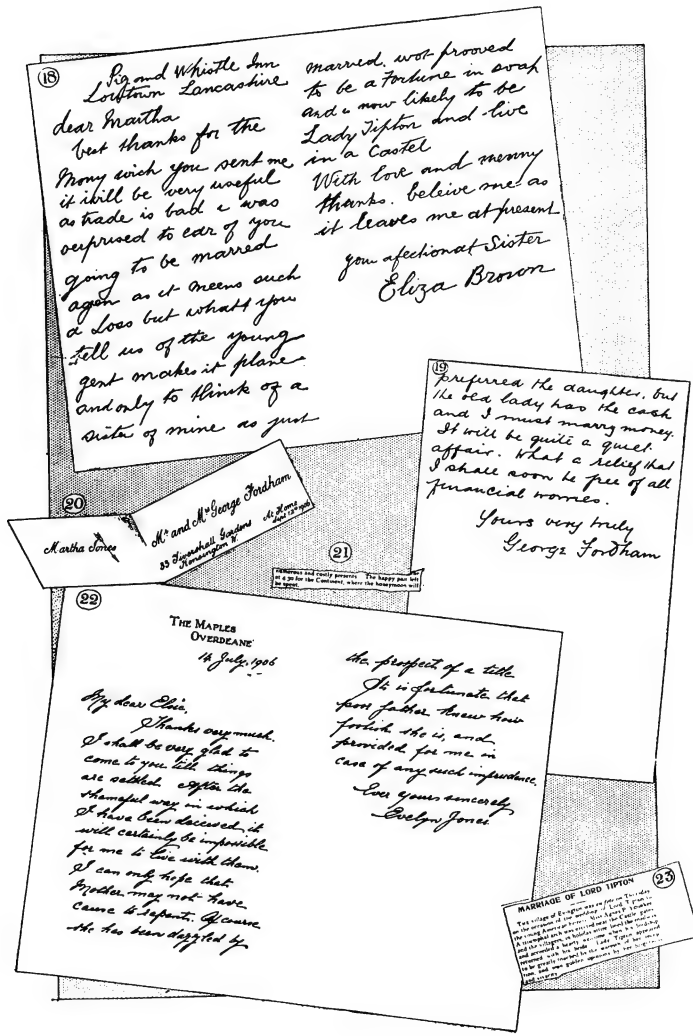

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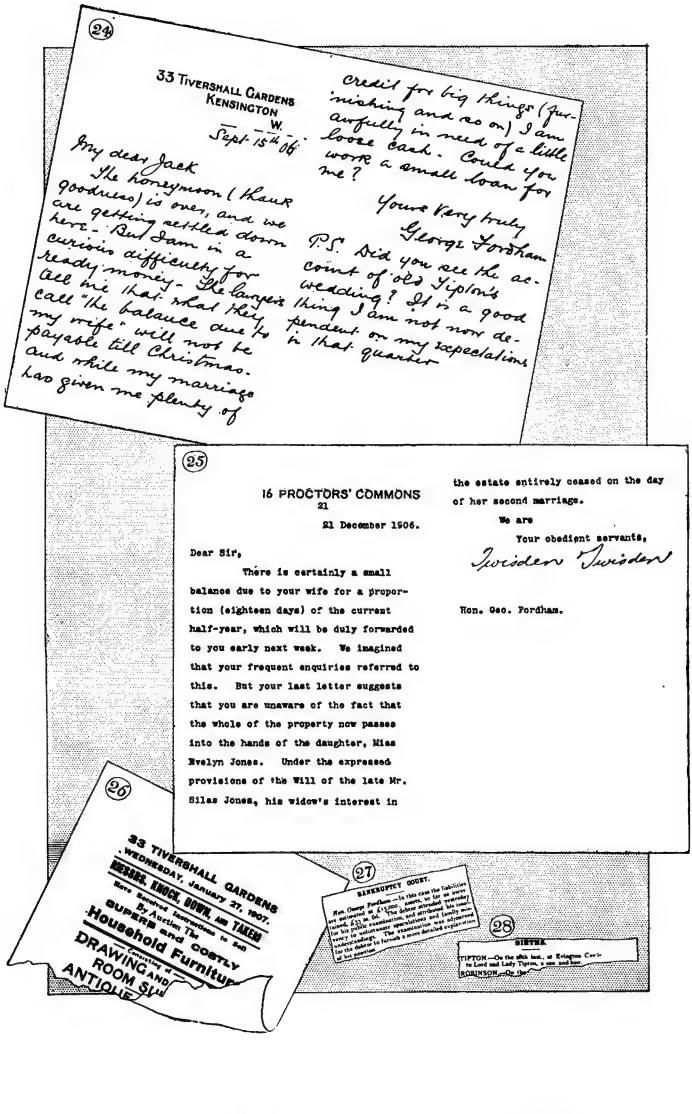

(24)

33 Tivershall Gardens
Kensington
W.
Sept. 15th 06.

My dear Jack
The honeymoon (thank goodness) is over, and we are getting settled down here. But I am in a curious difficulty for ready money. The lawyers tell me that what they call "the balance due to my wife" will not be payable till Christmas. And while my marriage has given me plenty of credit for big things (furnishing and so on) I am awfully in need of a little loose cash. Could you work a small loan for me?

Yours Very truly
George Fordham

P.S. Did you see the account of old Tipton's wedding? It is a good thing I am not now dependent on my expectations in that quarter

(25)

16 PROCTORS' COMMONS
21
21 December 1906.

Dear Sir,

There is certainly a small balance due to your wife for a proportion (eighteen days) of the current half-year, which will be duly forwarded to you early next week. We imagined that your frequent enquiries referred to this. But your last letter suggests that you are unaware of the fact that the whole of the property now passes into the hands of the daughter, Miss Evelyn Jones. Under the expressed provisions of the Will of the late Mr. Silas Jones, his widow's interest in the estate entirely ceased on the day of her second marriage.

We are
Your obedient servants,
Swinden Swinden

Hon. Geo. Fordham.

(26)

33 TIVERSHALL GARDENS
WEDNESDAY, January 27, 1907.
MESSRS. KNOCK, DOWN, AND TAKEM
Have Received Instructions to Sell
By Auction The
SUPERB and COSTLY
Household Furniture
Comprising a Fine
DRAWING AND
ROOM SUI
ANTIQUE

(27)

BANKRUPTCY COURT.

Re George Fordham.—In this case the liabilities are estimated at £1,500. The debtor attributes his insolvency to unfortunate speculations, and family expenses. The public examination was fixed for the 28th inst. at Bankruptcy Buildings. The official receiver has not yet received a report from the debtor as to his affairs.

(28)

BIRTHS.

TIPTON.—On the 28th inst., at Kelgrave Court, to Lord and Lady Tipton, a son and heir.

ROBINSON.—On the

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A Trip to Bewilderland

The Wonderful Things that Happened in a Dream.

By Phyllis Dare.

(*The popular Musical Comedy Actress.*)

I was sitting alone in the long, bare classroom of the school in Brussels, where I had been sent to finish my education. From its shady garden below came the cheerful hum of the girlish voices. My companions were enjoying their recreation hour, while I, alas! was detained indoors to do over again some horrible sums which would persist in getting "wronger and wronger" every time. "What is it all about?" I murmured wearily; "I can make nothing of this stupid sum—I am utterly bewildered."

I stretched myself lazily, yawned wearily, and stared absently at Sister Celestine's desk, behind which stood a funereal-looking blackboard covered with row after row of neatly-chalked figures.

I yawned again; my eyes felt so heavy that I simply had to close them "just for a moment." When I opened them again I was astonished to see that those neatly-chalked figures on the blackboard were actually moving. They were separating and arranging themselves in pairs. "They are going to dance the Lancers," I said to myself, "no, it is the Grand March."

And the Grand March it was.

Two by two, beginning with several pairs of tall, slender "ones" and ending with big-headed, thin-legged "nines," the long procession of figures proceeded to march steadily down the blackboard. Another moment and they were trooping across the raised platform of Sister Celestine's desk, and with measured tread were coming towards me. As they filed before my astonished eyes, each couple bowed solemnly to me, and quite unconsciously I found myself standing up and making graceful bows in return, while, when a tall, elegant figure, with a daintily-curled neck and a flowing tail, which I recognised as a "two," offered me his hand, I graciously accepted it, and formed one of the strange procession.

We mounted the platform and marched towards the blackboard. "Now where are we going?" I said to myself. "We can't go any farther unless we walk through the blackboard—and, of course, that would be quite impossible." But, strangely enough, it proved the easiest thing in the world, for, as we drew near it, I saw with surprise that it was not a

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My eyes felt so heavy, I simply had to close them "just for a moment."

blackboard at all, but a wide black tunnel, and into this we boldly marched. As we passed between the shining coal-black walls, I noticed that the way was marked out by what appeared to be tall white posts, placed here and there at intervals against the inky-blackness of the arched walls. I said they "appeared" to be posts, for posts do not usually salute, and most certainly I saw each post make a solemn, dignified bow as the long procession filed past him.

"How very white they look," I murmured half aloud. "I do really believe they are, after all, nothing but sticks of chalk."

And that is just what they were!

At last we came to the end of the tunnel, and passing through a narrow opening which we could only just manage to do by squeezing in one at a time, we came out into a great, wide, open space or plain. I blinked my eyes hard, and stared around me in great disappointment. Everything was wrapped in a great, thick, white fog, and although behind it the sun seemed to be shining, and now and again I caught glimpses of what looked like green grass, and lovely flowers, and spreading trees, yet all was hidden from view by the mist.

"It looks like the Wilderness," I said to myself—at least, I meant to say it to myself, only somebody evidently overheard me, for a rasping voice at my side said: "Well, and it is the Bewilderness." I gave a startled jump, and looked round to see a strange old man with a long, white beard, and clad in a long, shabby gown made of leather, glaring fiercely at me.

"Wh—what did you say, please?" I asked nervously, as I turned again to glance at this strange-looking old man at my elbow.

"I said it is the Bewilderness," replied the creature, yawning into my face, so that I shrank timidly away.

"But I said Wilderness," I ventured meekly.

"And I said Be-wilderness," he said, glaring at me so fiercely that I could only summon up sufficient courage to murmur apologetically: "I don't think I quite understand."

"Precisely," said he promptly, "that is why you are here, isn't it? You said just now you were quite bewildered, now didn't you, miss?"

"Yes," I said hastily; "I did, indeed."

"Very well, then, what is the proper place for bewildered people, pray? Why, the Bewilderness, of course." He yawned at me triumphantly, and I said meekly: "Yes, I suppose you are right. But why is it so foggy?"

"Ah—aha!—that's the Bewilderment," said the ugly old man, trying to look very wise. "It's always there. What you have to do is

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to learn to see through it, you know."

"And what is there to see?" I asked anxiously.

"Well, that depends on what you want to see. What bewildered you?"

"I think it was a sum," I answered with a sigh. "But please do tell me who you are, and how I can see through this tiresome fog."

"I am the Dominee," said the white-bearded old man imperiously, "and if you want to see through anything there is only one way. You must put two and two together—ah! there goes the school; my class will be waiting for me, so I must wish you good-morning."

Everything was wrapped in a great, thick, white fog.

The Dominee vanished, and I looked around me perplexedly.

"Put two and two together," the old man said. But how am I to do that? And where have all the figures gone, I wonder? Not a single one could be seen.

"What is the matter, child?" said a mild voice suddenly from somewhere near my feet.

I looked down and saw a pretty yellow butterfly clinging to a blade of grass. The voice evidently belonged to her; and although I felt inclined to laugh at the idea of this insignificant creature addressing me as "child," the little thing spoke so kindly that I forgave her condescension, and answered dejectedly: "I want to know how I am ever going to get out of this puzzling place?"

"The Bewilderness, you mean," said the butterfly sympathisingly. "Yes, it is difficult, isn't it? Have you tried putting two and two together?"

I could not help giving another impatient little stamp.

"That's what the Dominee said," I cried pettishly; "but how can I put two and two together, or three and three, or any other rubbishy figures, when I can't find any of them?"

"Ah, that's because of the Bewilderment!" said the butterfly, fluttering her wings wisely; "you want to get the magic wand, and then you can see through everything at once—even vulgar fractions and repeating decimals, which are very hard to see through."

"But how am I to get the wand?" I asked wearily, for I was beginning to feel utterly tired out after my strange experiences in this bewildering land.

"Oh, you will have to go to the Dominee's school, and win all the rods for yourself—you can't get them in any

"Ah! there goes the school; my class will be waiting for me, so I must wish you good-morning."

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"Come and kneel down before me, and we will see what you can do, miss."

other way," said the butterfly, looking at me with a mournful expression which seemed to say: "Really, you people from the other world are too utterly ignorant for words."

"And where is the Dominee's school?" I questioned anxiously. "I cannot find my way anywhere in this bewildering fog, you see."

The yellow butterfly extended her wings. "Wait here for a moment," she said encouragingly, "and I will send you a guide who will take you there." She flitted away into the mist, and presently a thin voice piped out: "If you are ready, little stranger, you had better come quick, or else school will be over for to-day."

Just as I was beginning to despair a familiar voice said:

"What is the matter, young lady? Can I help you in any way?"

I turned quickly round, and found myself faced by my old friend the "two," with the daintily-curled neck and graceful flowing tail.

"So you want to get into the Dominee's school, do you?" he said good-naturedly, and before I had time to reply he had selected a thin blue wand from his quiver, and, waving it to and fro, the mist forthwith disappeared, and I found myself in a large schoolroom with a door at the end which evidently led into another class-room, for it was labelled "Class-room for Adults."

Before the blackboard stood the Dominee, while clustered around him were numbers of his pupils. As soon as the Dominee caught sight of my friend, he pointed his rod at him, and said fiercely: "Why

"Now, tell me—you—the answer to this problem."

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are you late, sir? Sit down at once, and when you do so don't say as you did a fortnight ago: 'If I make puns I shall be punished.'"

"I am very sorry," said my friend apologetically, hurrying to his place.

At this moment the Dominee caught sight of me, and, yawning most impolitely, he pointed his rod at me. "Ha! whom have we here? A new pupil, it seems. Come and kneel down before me, and we will see what you can do, miss. An actress, eh? Well, later on, then, we shall have to send you to a 'school of acting.' To your place at once!"

I looked wildly round, and to my great relief saw my partner of the procession, the graceful "two," making signs to me to join him. Before I could do so the Dominee, fixing his cold eyes on me, asked fiercely: "Now, tell me — you — the answer to this problem. If I buy a doll for 1*s.* 9*d.*, one — and — ninepence, mind — and its head comes off, how much will it cost to have it mended?"

"In the garden over there, and coming towards you, you will find two 'twos'—put them together."

"That depends," I was beginning, when my partner eyed me anxiously.

"Don't say that," he whispered. "Say 4*s.* 6*d.* or 8*d.*, or anything will do."

"Sixpence," I said boldly, and the Dominee yawned approvingly.

"Next one," he said. "If a caterpillar has twenty-six legs—*if*, I said, mind—how many wings has a cow?"

"Ten," I answered briskly.

"Goose," said the Dominee contemptuously, "I said wings."

"Please, sir," said the "two" hurriedly, "she meant wings."

"In that case she is right," said the Dominee, giving a mollified yawn, "and the class is now dismissed. You may have your wand, girl," he added sententiously, "so now go and learn how to put two and two together. In the garden over there, and coming towards you, you will find two 'twos'—put them together."

"Put two and two together," I murmured breathlessly. "How shall I put them, I wonder? Side by side, or back to back, or face to face."

The "twos" glared at each other fiercely as the Dominee, leaving me outside, re-entered the school-room. They approached each other, and I heard them snarling.

"They are going to fight," I thought, and in a second they had sprung at each other. Their long, thin bodies writhed and twisted, then stiffened and straightened. What had happened! Surely there was only one figure now, where two had been before. "Ha — ha — ha!" sounded the Dominee's mocking voice in my ear, "put two and two together, stupid, and — you — will — get — four!"

* *

"So the poor child has fallen asleep over her sum" — surely that was Sister Celestine's gentle voice I heard. I awoke with a start to find myself, not in Bewilderland, but in the long, bare class-room of my school in Brussels.

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TRICKS for EVERYONE

Mr. David Devant.

Clever Conjuring with Common Objects.

By David Devant.

No one has a better claim to initiate the many into the secrets of conjuring and sleight of hand than Mr. David Devant, who, in company with Mr. Maskelyne, keeps up the reputation of St. George's Hall as a "Home of Mystery." The tricks which he explains in the following article have three great recommendations: (1) Anyone can perform them. (2) They completely mystify the audience. (3) They require the very simplest apparatus—merely a pencil, a ruler, and similar ordinary articles.

I.—TRICKS AT THE WRITING TABLE.

The following articles will be found to be practical lessons in conjuring. Many people have the erroneous idea that if they know how a trick is done they are quite capable of presenting it to an audience. I have always found that a very little experience will show such persons that the mere knowledge of the secret of a trick is not of much value to a beginner unless it is accompanied by some simple instructions showing him the best way of using his knowledge. Therefore, I shall not merely give away secrets of tricks, but shall endeavour to make my explanation of each trick a complete lesson in its performance.

No conjuror can attach too much importance to rehearsals. Generally speaking, a conjuror's rehearsal may be divided into three parts. It is first necessary to acquire the dexterity demanded in the performance of a trick. Secondly, the "patter"—that is to say, the words spoken during the performance—must be learnt by heart, and rehearsed with as much care as a reciter gives to a piece, or a vocalist to a song.

Lastly, when the conjuror has trained his hands to do all that is required of them in a trick, and can say his "patter" in such a way that no point is missed, he should try to say his "patter" while he is performing the trick. The beginner will find that it is not always an easy matter to do one thing while you are talking about something else quite different.

Rehearsals should be continued until the performance can be given without a moment's hesitation; in fact, the conjuror should appear to be performing on the spur of the moment, and making up his genial comments on the trick as it develops. No one must suspect that he knows the whole thing by heart, and that he has discovered what effect each word and each movement will produce on his audience.

I shall endeavour as far as possible to give all the tricks a new setting, and the various articles that may be found on any writing-table will be used in the first set of tricks I am about to explain. In order to save space I shall give first the "patter"—with only such stage directions as may be necessary—and then I shall show just "how it's done." My first trick is:

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THE WANDERING PENCIL.

The Performance of the Trick.

I have here what is to all appearances an ordinary lead pencil. If the trick should go wrong the pencil will write (right) matters; that's why I use a pencil. The outside of the pencil is wood (*tapping it on the table*), as wooden as you can want (*tapping it on his head*). I mean, of course, the pencil.

Still, though the pencil appears to be about as ordinary as quarter day, I will show you that it is as deceitful as a gas meter. Let me explain. Here are two long envelopes—as empty as a schoolboy before dinner. (*Picks up one envelope mouth downwards, holds pencil in it, and knocks it with pencil to show that it is empty. The envelope is then put down on the table, mouth away from the audience.*)

The other envelope is just as empty as the first one. (*Picks it up and handles it in the same way, but keeps it in left hand.*) I am going to put this deceitful magic pencil into this envelope, and ask it to walk across invisibly to the empty envelope on the table. It shall go just when you please, if you'll say the word.

Now? I'm very much afraid you were half a second too late—this pencil is always so impatient, and it went across while you were thinking about it. (*Crumples up envelope, showing that the pencil is not there.*) You see it isn't there, for the simple reason that it cannot be in two places at once, and it really has gone to the other envelope. (*Goes to the other envelope, takes out pencil, and taps it on table to show that it is solid.*)

THE WANDERING PENCIL.
Showing how the pencil is allowed to slide out of the paper tube or shell into the envelope.

How the Trick is Done.

The pencil was covered with a paper case, open at both ends, of the same colour and appearance as the pencil. If any difficulty is found in getting paper the right shade, the conjuror may paste a piece of paper round the pencil, and he can then make a case of the same paper. The case must be fairly stiff, but must fit easily so that the pencil can slip out when it is not held tightly.

When the first envelope was picked up and shown to be empty the conjuror put the end of the pencil into the envelope and tapped it to show that it was empty. It was then an easy matter to let the pencil slip out of the case into the envelope, which, by the way, must be so thick that the audience cannot see through it. The envelope, with the pencil inside it, was then put down on the table, with the mouth away from the audience.

The table should have a cloth on it, otherwise the pencil will knock on the table and give the trick away. The conjuror was then apparently holding the pencil, but really it was only the paper shell which he put into the second envelope. In crumpling up the envelope with the shell in it, care must be taken to begin by bending the envelope in half; if the conjurer brings his hand up to the bottom of the envelope and crushes it up carelessly in that way he may push the paper shell an inch or two out of the envelope and so spoil the trick. I once saw an amateur make this very mistake, and the effect was not at all what he wanted.

The crumpled-up envelope should then be thrown away apparently carelessly, but out of reach of the audience. It will be seen that if the "patter" is altered slightly the trick can be performed equally well with a round or flat ruler. The same pencil can be used in the next trick.

It is always a good and useful plan to make one trick run into the next one as far as possible. In the course of the next trick the audience have an opportunity of handling the pencil with which the conjuror has just performed, and by the time the whole performance is over they will have forgotten that they did not touch the pencil before the first trick.

Thus, when the audience are talking about the performance afterwards, the trick just performed will seem more mysterious than it really was, and the conjuror will get more praise than he really deserves. I have never yet found the conjuror who objects to this.

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THE FLEXIBLE PENCIL.

(1) Showing how impossible it is to make the pencil go through the loop of string.

THE FLEXIBLE PENCIL.

The Performance of the Trick.

I have shown you that the pencil is just an ordinary pencil, hard and solid. You may be interested in knowing that the pencil—in fact, any pencil—is also flexible. I am going to make a little notch round the pencil (*cuts it with a knife*), so that I may fasten this loop of string securely to it. You will notice that the loop is just about half the length of the pencil.

Now, if I put this loop right through my buttonhole it is obviously impossible to put the other end of the pencil through the loop, and so fasten the pencil to my coat. You will admit, I think, that that is impossible unless the pencil is flexible, in which case, of course, you just bend it up and pass it through the loop.

As the process necessary for rendering the pencil flexible is rather dangerous, I shall turn my back on you while it is in progress. I apologise for my back; it's the only one I have. (*Turns round for a moment, and then faces audience again with the pencil attached to the buttonhole by the loop.*)

There, you see, I have made the pencil flexible, but it has now returned to its original state, and therefore cannot be removed from the coat. Perhaps some one would like to try and take it away without cutting the string? (*Goes down to audience.*)

Of course to get it off again I have to make it flexible again. (*Turns back on audience, removes pencil from coat, and hands it for examination.*)

How the Trick is Done.

Spread the loop of string over the button- hole of the coat, and pull a portion of the coat with the buttonhole in the centre through the loop. The thinner the coat the easier this part of the trick will be. The conjuror must go on pulling until he can put the end of the pencil without the string attached through the buttonhole.

Then let him pull the pencil right through, and the pencil will then be passed through the loop of string, and will thus be fastened to the coat. To get it off again reverse the process. It is more difficult to get it off one's own coat than to get it on. It is not advisable to do this trick with a short pencil, for unless the loop of string is fairly large the conjuror will find great difficulty in passing part of the coat through it.

Take care that you know this trick thoroughly before you try it on a friend's coat; otherwise the coat will be merely crumpled up, and your friend's temper ruffled up, and your performance muffed.

(2) The first movement after the conjuror has turned his back to make the pencil flexible. A piece of the coat is pulled through the loop of string.

(3) Putting the pencil through the buttonhole. When this has been done the pencil is attached firmly to the coat, the other end has apparently passed under the loop, and the miracle is accomplished.

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THE VANISHING RULER.—(1) Showing how the ruler should be held. (2) The first stage of the disappearance. (3) The second stage, showing how the ruler is held behind the right arm.——

THE VANISHING RULER.

This is a trick that was actually suggested to me once by an amateur conjuror whom I was teaching. He fell into the unpleasant habit of asking me to do the most impossible things for his amusement. I declined to show him how to make the dining-room table float in the air or how to open the window without touching them.

"I don't believe you could make that ruler vanish," he said jokingly.

I pointed out to him that that really was an impossibility because the ruler had already gone, and that I knew it had gone, partly because I could not see it, and partly because I could feel it; that is to say, I was sitting on it.

The trick is over in a fraction of a second, and really the only word of patter you want is: "Look!" The photographs show better than any words exactly how the trick is done. The conjuror sits down and holds the ruler between his two hands. The left hand is taken away and the right middle finger grasps the ruler and points it towards the arm. The movement is continued until the ruler is pressed down into the bend of the arm by the right hand and the hands can be held up showing that the ruler has vanished. Need I say that these movements must be practised until they can be made in a flash. It is really a case of the quickness of the hand deceiving the eye.

The arms are then crossed carelessly and the ruler is still concealed under the right arm. The conjuror gets up quickly and, holding the ruler by the left hand, turns round. This puts the conjuror in the position of being able to take the ruler from the seat of his chair, and thus he has apparently been sitting on it.

(4) Gone! (5) The arms casually crossed; the ruler is still under the right arm. (6) Resurrection of the ruler.

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THE FLOATING TRICK.

The Performance of the Trick.

All pencils will float in water; this one, being a spiritualistic pencil, does not like water, but it will float quite nicely in the air—in this way. (*Holds right hand a few inches away from body, with knuckles facing audience. Places pencil across fingers, to which it adheres.*) There's no need to talk about this pencil; you can see what it's doing all the time. It likes doing this.

THE FLOATING PENCIL.
This illustration shows the apparatus necessary, and how it is held.

(*Takes pencil away from hand and places it across thumb. It floats in that position.*) I train all my pencils to do this; if my thoughts won't come to me my pencils will (*moving his hand to and from his body*). The simplest way to do this is to hit yourself hard with the pencil three times; then it sticks on the fingers by means of the whacks.

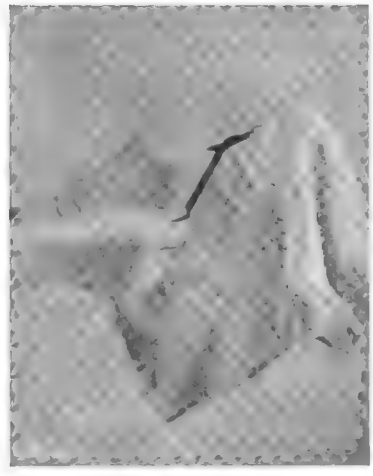
However, there's no wax either on my finger or the pencil. Sometimes you can do this by mesmerising the pencil. (*Stretches out his fingers and pencil appears to stick to the tips of the fingers.*) The harder the pencil the easier the trick. (*Takes away pencil from fingers, hands it down for examination, and shows hands.*)

How the Trick is Done.

This trick is performed with the help of a long loop of black thread and a small weight arranged in the following manner: Thread about a yard and a half of stout thread on a needle. Undo the waistcoat. and, putting the needle inside, about on a level with the second button, pass it through the waistcoat. Put it back about two inches higher up.

Take the needle from the thread and tie the two ends of the thread together. Next, tie the knotted end to the weight. The weight may be a piece of lead about the size of a thimble, with a hole through it, so that the thread can be tied to it. A few of the things known to ladies as "dress weights," which can be purchased at a draper's, will also do for the purpose. They may be inclosed in a small bag with a ring at the top, and the thread can then be tied to the ring. When the weight is attached to the thread it is put into the trousers and allowed to drop down the leg. If these directions are properly carried out there is then a loop of thread drawn up tightly by means of the weight against the waistcoat. To make the pencil float against the fingers, all the conjuror had to do was to get hold of the loop of thread, pull it away from him, and slip the pencil through it. This had to be done without letting the audience into the secret.

The weight pulling on the thread will then draw the pencil against the side of the hand or the thumb, and the other hand can then be passed over the top of the pencil and underneath it and, apparently, all round it to show that the pencil is quite isolated. For the mesmeric effect at the end the conjuror takes the pencil out of the loop, and the weight draws the thread close up to the waistcoat where it is not seen.



A TRICK WITH A POINT.
Taking out the duplicate pencil that has been hidden between the two dusters sewn together.

The pencil is made to adhere to the fingers by pressing on it with the tips of the second and third fingers and pressing "away from you" with the tips of the little finger and first finger. The dexterity necessary to do this depends a good deal on the shape of the hand. Some performers find it easy, others very difficult.

Remember to test any thread used in a trick just before the performance. I have an unpleasant recollection of a pupil

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who neglected to do this, and then blamed me because the weight fell with what the reporters call "a sickening thud!"

A TRICK WITH A POINT.

The Performance of the Trick.

Next to having a pencil that constantly loses itself, the most exasperating thing is to have a pencil without a point; in fact, it's almost as bad as a joke without a point. The only thing to do is to sharpen your wits—and the pencil—and then you have two points.

In this trick I require a pencil without a point. Perhaps someone will sharpen the pencil, and then break the point (*hands pencil to someone in the audience*). I have done this so that you may be sure the pencil is capable of being sharpened in the ordinary way. I will now show you how to sharpen it in a way that is not ordinary. The next time your pencil breaks, and you cannot find a knife to sharpen it, don't lose your temper.

Wipe the end of the pencil with a duster—as you would wipe a pen—and (*wipes pencil with a duster and puts duster down again on table*) if you do the thing properly you will find that you have wiped the wood away, and so got another point to your pencil. (*Hands pencil to audience and shows the point on it.*)

How the Trick is Done.

The secret of the trick lay in the duster, which was made of two dusters sewn together round the edge. In the centre of one of them was a small slit, and just inside this slit was a small loop of elastic.

A duplicate pencil, pointed and exactly like the one shown to the audience, was slipped into this loop before the trick began. Under the pretence of wiping the pencil with the broken point the conjuror dropped it through the slit in the duster and slipped the duplicate pencil out of the loop of the elastic.

CURIOUS PAPER PATTERNS.

The Performance of the Trick.

The other evening when I got home I found my wife cutting out a paper pattern. I'm not quite sure what it was a pattern of, but I believe it was either a pattern of a waist belt or a dog collar. Anyhow it was something like this. (*Shows a newspaper, tears off a long strip about two inches wide and pins the ends together with two small pins.*)

Having made a thing like this, she wanted another, and so cut the thing in half, in this way. (*Divides it in two by cutting it all round with a pair of scissors.*) I said that that was perfectly simple, and that anybody could make a paper pattern in that way. My wife said that it wasn't so easy as it looked, and challenged me to do it. So I tried.

(*Makes another ring of paper and cuts it all round.*) You see it was not so easy as I thought, for I failed to make two separate rings of paper by cutting one into two. (*Holds up paper showing that it is one big ring.*) I don't know how it came like that, but there it was, and so my wife asked me to try again.

CURIOUS PAPER PATTERNS.
How the twist is given to the paper before the band is made.

I made another ring of paper (*makes one similar to the other two*), and cut it again, and just as I thought I had succeeded my wife said it must go into two separate rings of paper—with the accent on the "separate"—and you will see that I failed again. There is a moral to this trick, but I shall leave married men to discover it.

How the Trick is Done.

The first ring of paper was made in the ordinary way. In joining the ends of the second ring together the conjuror turned one end round before he pinned the two together.

The simplest way to do this is to hold the strip of paper in the left hand and let it hang down over the back of the hand.

The third ring was made in the same way, except that one end was turned round twice before the two ends were joined. The longer the two strips of paper are the less chance there is of the twist being detected.

The rings must not be handed to the audience before they are cut, but afterwards anyone may examine them without the slightest risk that he will discover the secret. Provide yourself with a long pair of scissors; otherwise the cutting process will seem very slow to the audience.

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Photo Vandyk.

Royal Edward, the property of Mrs. de Courcy Laffan, who founded the Brotherhood of Hero Dogs. He is an honorary member of the League, and begs very cleverly in aid of it.

Real Life Romances

By Marcus Woodward.

Dogs play their part no less than human beings in many Romances of Real Life. In the following pages is given a selection of brave deeds from the records of the Brotherhood of Hero Dogs, founded by Mrs. de Courcy Laffan. A silver-studded collar is awarded by the Brotherhood to dog heroes.

The Faithfulness of Little Nell.

A London lady with a great heart—a writer of beautiful songs and poems and love-stories—one day was passing through Trafalgar Square when she noticed that a little dog attached to a blind man's string was shivering with cold. The blind man was a well-known character in Trafalgar Square, where he had sold matches day by day for twelve years, always, in sunshine or in snow, accompanied by his little dog, whose life's task it was to guard his master and guide him safely through the streets. The lady made the dog a warm coat and a set of little boots.

At last, the blind man who was very old, fell ill, and was forced to go to hospital; and the worst of this was that his faithful dog, "Little Nell," had to be separated from him, while he lay in the hospital ward, choking for breath beneath the grip of terrible asthma. "Little Nell" was taken to the house of the kind friend of the coat and shoes, but would not be comforted. She would neither eat nor drink, and it was necessary to pour milk down her throat; and always, out of her pathetic eyes, she was looking for the coming of her master.

Photo Treble.

Little Nell, the faithful guide of a blind match-seller in Trafalgar Square. Separated from her master through his illness, she died of joy at their ultimate re-union.

Many weeks passed before the old man got his discharge. They put him into a cab, and brought him at once, at his express wish, to where his Little Nell was waiting. She was ready for him—lying in a room with her eyes, as always, on the door, in expectation. The door opened; the blind man stood on the threshold. With one spring Little Nell was in his arms.

The blind man pressed her to his breast, bent his old head to kiss her and be kissed, and, choking with glad sobs, sank on his knees. In this beautiful reunion of the long-parted there was something of the divine. But suddenly—a tragedy happened. The little dog's body stiffened — the old blind man's arms released their hold—the little dog lay on the ground, her joyous whinings and barking and tongue-kissing mysteriously cut short.

Little Nell had died of joy.

You may imagine how this scene wrought on the heart of the poetess, before whose eyes it took place. The idea came to her to find some way of

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perpetuating the memory of such a wonderful instance of the love and faithfulness of a dog. Why should there not be, she thought, an order of merit for dogs, a guild of dog heroes—with Little Nell as its first member? It would be a splendid way of placing on record the noble deeds of dogs—of throwing a strong light upon their love, their faithfulness, their sagacity, their heroic self-sacrifice that often passes almost unnoticed and unsung. Such a scheme might influence public opinion, and open many blind eyes to a new understanding of dog-nature.

So it came about that the Brotherhood of Hero Dogs was brought to being by the poetess, whose name is Mrs. de Courcy Laffan, whose home—the centre of a literary coterie—is in St. George's Road, London, S.W. The task was at once set upon of collecting every fresh instance of the fidelity and devotion of dogs, of enrolling the hero dogs in the books of the Brotherhood, and of seeing to it that each hero was presented with a fine silver-studded collar, inscribed with the record of nobility.

Robert, a fox-terrier who saved his master from being asphyxiated through an escape of gas.

The Story of Robert's Perseverance in the Face of Danger.

A notable member of the Brotherhood is Robert, a gallant and handsome little fox-terrier of King's Norton, in Worcestershire. This is the story of Robert's bravery:

Robert had been given the duty of helping a gardener to take care of an empty house. One night his instinct told him something was wrong—there was an unusual smell in the house, a dangerous smell, not to be borne. He leapt on his fellow-caretaker's bed and began to lick the face of the sleeper, thereby showing specially good sense, for the gardener was hard of hearing, and mere barking would not have aroused him. But it was a long time before he awoke. In a sleepy way he brushed the dog aside, but presently, on raising his head from the pillow, he became dimly aware of a sense of danger.

He tried to light a match—there was only one in the box, and it refused to ignite. The dog now became importunate, barking, whining, licking at the man's face, tugging at the clothes, at last succeeding in getting him from bed.

But still he remained as it were stupefied; he staggered down the stairs and to the front door, feeling, as he said afterwards, as if he were being strangled, while his head seemed to swell to bursting-point. At the door he fell on his knees, then painfully tried to crawl to a neighbouring cottage. It was but a few yards distant, yet half-an-hour passed before he reached it, and, by feeble calls, aroused the inmates. The cottager and his wife speedily tended their unfortunate visitor, clad only in his shirt, and sounded an alarm.

The police soon discovered what had happened—the gas-pipes in the house had been leaking, and the whole house had rapidly filled with gas, so that had it not been for the importunities of Robert, the gardener must have been suffocated. As it was, when the dog had aroused him, the gas fumes had begun their work of asphyxiation.

The police had turned off the meter before anyone thought of the dog, who was found at last in a state of semi-consciousness. The doctor brought his master round by artificial respiration, and Robert was taken to the local chemist, and was soon restored to his usual buoyant health—to be presented

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Gip, although he had a horror of water, saved a little girl from drowning in the river Lea.

in due course with his badge of nobility, the silver-studded collar of the heroes' Brotherhood.

Gip's Gallant Rescue from Drowning.

A strange story is the story of Gip, a collie.

One day Gip was being taken for a run over Hackney Marshes, and came to a bridge spanning the river Lea. Alongside the bridge is a drain-pipe, whereon children are fond of playing for the sake of adventure. As Gip came to the bridge a little girl fell off the pipe into the middle of the river.

Now, Gip had a constitutional dislike of water. His people had tried often to induce him to swim, but he would never go out of his depth But see Gip on this day running down off the bridge to the stone slope beneath, there to sit whining just for a second, then to plunge cleanly into the river, to catch the little girl by the skirts with his mouth, and bring her to the bank. Gip was fourteen months old when he saved this little girl's life and took his first swim.

Lucy's Vigil by her Dead Master.

Lucy is a very beautiful spaniel, and hers is a sad story. Her master, who lived at Westhoughton, lost his life in tragic circumstances, falling one night into a pond in which he was drowned. Lucy was with him at the time, and all night the faithful creature remained watching beside the pond, not understanding what had happened.

Devoted to her master, she did all she could—she found his cap, and lay down with her paws upon it, so that at least no one should steal it until her master came. In the morning, some people passed by the pond and approached her, but she would not allow them to come near lest they should try to take away the cap.

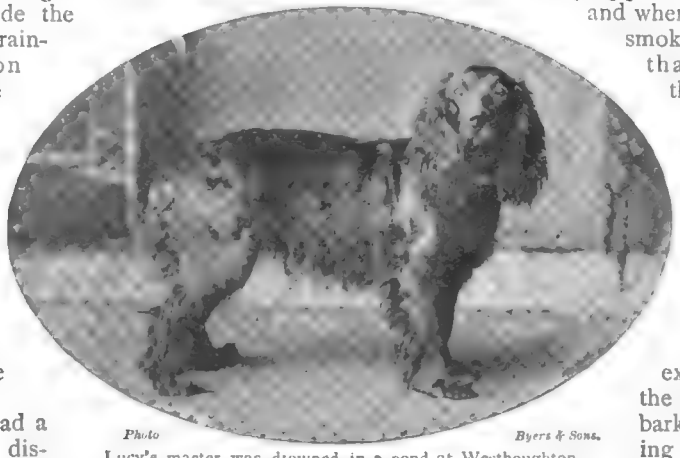

Photo Byers & Sons.

Lucy's master was drowned in a pond at Westhoughton, and the faithful spaniel watched all night by the pond. She lay beside her master's cap, and refused to let anyone come near.

How Soot Saved his Master's Family from Fire.

The next story I have to tell is of a retriever named Soot, a brave and beautiful dog, who gave his own life to save others.

Early one morning a fire broke out in Soot's home at Silsden. His sleeping place was the cellar, and when he smelt the smoke, it appears that his first thought was to warn his master and mistress. He bounded up three flights of stairs, rushed into their bedroom, leapt excitedly on to the bed, and, by barking and licking their faces, succeeded in waking them.

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"We did not know then that the house was on fire," relates his mistress. "We only knew that Soot was very excited—he seemed almost mad. I remember we jumped out of bed, and as soon as the bedroom door was opened, we realised that the whole house was on fire. I think we all three—my husband, Soot, and myself—flew down the steps, and I kept hearing my husband say: 'Come, Soot—come, good lad!' Then I suppose the smoke became too dense for him to coax Soot, who must have gone back instead of forward—I do not know this, I only guess, for I became unconscious, and was carried into a neighbour's house.

"I regained consciousness several times during the early morning, and my one cry was for Soot; but each time they soothed me by saying he was quite safe. I seemed to know, though, all along, that he was dead, for had he been alive nothing would have parted him from me. I cannot describe to anyone the great love he had for my husband and myself, but his noble action proves it. I think that no one could say anything too grand about him."

Photo *Curson Studios.*

Nell gave the alarm when her master's house was ablaze, and without her the family would have perished.

Why had Soot gone back up the stairs? The probable reason for his return to the upper storey was to find a boy who had slept there; in seeking whom he was overcome by the smoke, and burnt to death.

Had it not been for his bravery and faithfulness there is little doubt that his master and mistress would have lost their lives. A few moments more and their escape by the staircase would have been cut off—and there was no other way.

Several members of the Brotherhood have saved lives from fire; a point that should make many consider the question of keeping a dog in the house, if only for the reason of fire protection. The wonderful keenness of a dog's nose, even when he is asleep, soon tells him that something is wrong when a fire breaks out; and here are some instances to prove that a dog who loves his people will probably do his utmost to arouse them to their danger.

Photo *Mandeley.*

Floss, who aroused a household when the house was on fire by scratching at the bedroom door.

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Photo *Fowle.*

Jess saved the lives of eight people by arousing them when asleep in a burning building.

The Sagacity of Floss and How it Saved a Household.

Floss is a buff-coloured Pomeranian, a very knowing and sensible little dog, who one midnight aroused a household at Blackburn by barking and scratching at a bedroom door. "I jumped out of bed," relates her master, "and went downstairs and found the house in flames. If it had not been for the timely warning of the dog we might have been blown to pieces, as the gas-meter is six inches below where the fire started. I am sure it must have been a God-send that we were saved; and it makes me prize the dog more and more."

Nell to the Rescue in a Burning House.

Nell, another terrier, saved the lives of a whole family at Stratford from fire, when most of the family must have perished if the alarm had been delayed a few moments; she now wears a silver-studded collar, inscribed: "I saved many lives."

An Irish Terrier's Timely Warning.

Jess, a smooth-haired Irish terrier of Sunderland, aroused a caretaker from sleep when a fire broke out, so saving his life and the lives of his wife and six children.

Dash's Splendid Gallantry.

A young man at Ilfracombe, had climbed the cliffs and managed to get himself into a most perilous position, the tide having come up and cut off his retreat. A party of men set out to his rescue in a boat, including a Mr. Willis—and his dog Dash. When the presence of Dash was discovered, he was promptly ejected, being thrown into the harbour.

He refused to go back to shore, and succeeded in climbing into the boat. Willis and another man with him landed at great personal risk; and then came the spaniel's turn. Climbing ahead with wonderful cleverness he led them by the best way for reaching the young man in peril. Without Dash to find a way rescue would have been impossible.

Mr. Willis and his dog Dash. Dash found a path up a precipitous cliff at Ilfracombe, and enabled his master to save a man who otherwise could not have been rescued.

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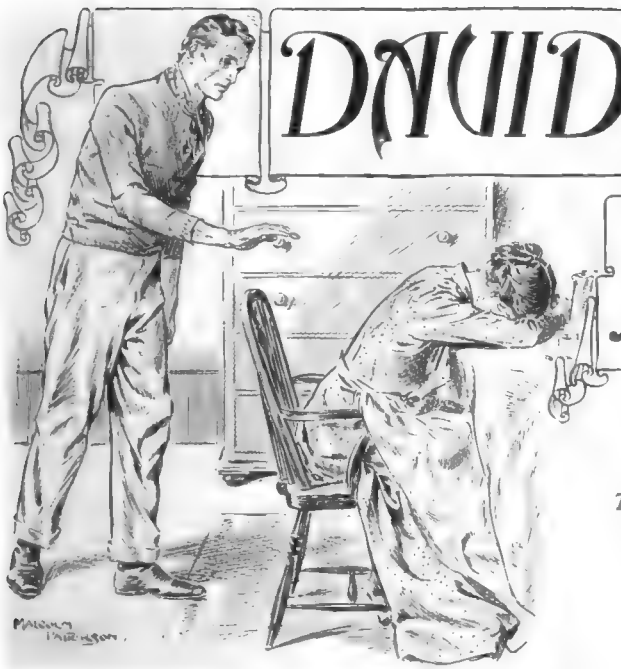

DAVIDSON'S MISSUS

The Story of a Misunderstanding.

By Ruby M. Ayres.

When the doctor had gone, Davidson's Missus sat for a long time staring at a patch of sunshine which filtered in at the window, past the red geraniums and spotless muslin curtains, and lay like a pool of gold on the floor of the little front room.

She was a small woman, with a pale face, and eyes that met those of the world in general, and Davidson in particular, with a half-frightened, half-apologetic expression in their grey depths.

Since Davidson had chosen her out of all the girls in Little Helpton for his Missus, she had discovered that life was made up of disappointments, and the happiness which she believed she held the day Davidson made the little church ring with the "I will" that made her his wife, had long since vanished and gone back to the nowhere whence it had come.

She knew that people had wondered what had made him choose her out of all the girls in the village who would gladly have married him, for he was a fine-looking man, and owned a boat of his own—and she knew, too, that Davidson had done so because she was the only one of them all who had allowed him to do his own courting, and had not gone more than half-way to meet him.

He had loved her then—but that was five years ago. Davidson's Missus rocked herself to and fro in misery as she thought of those five years—they had seemed so long, and so full of cross purposes, and hard, unnecessary words, and now—well, now it was over.

She looked out of the little window to the sea where the sunshine danced, and the little wooden harbour where the fishing boats lay at anchor.

The *Little 'Un*—Davidson's own boat, which he had bought the year they were married—was there, too, the smartest of them all.

How proud they had been of it! and how often she had sat at that same little window and watched it dance away over the waves in the sunlight, or strained her eyes to catch the first glimpse of its return on winter nights, when sky and sea were so grey and frowning that it was almost impossible to tell where one ended and the other began.

Soon, perhaps, when the *Little 'Un* turned her prow homeward, the blinds would be down at that little window, and there would be no Missus watching for Davidson.

Would he mind? Davidson's Missus wondered hopelessly—would he, perhaps, realise that he *did* care for her, after all? Last night he had said that he did not—that he was sorry he had ever married her—that she was like all other women once they had got what they wanted—that she was eternally nagging him—that—oh, a hundred other cruel things which hurt to remember.

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Davidson's Missus winced as she recalled them, and how she had answered: "You loved me when you married me"

And Davidson had laughed for answer.

"You were different then," he said, taking his cap down from the door. "The proof of the pudding's in the eating, as my mother used to say. I suppose I'm eating mine now; I don't like it, anyway."

Then he went out, slamming the door, and spent the rest of the evening at the "Jolly Fishermen" where the landlady was placid, and red-faced, and merry, and joked with the men, and never "nagged" anybody.

Ah! but then, she never suffered like Davidson's Missus—she never lay awake at night with that terrible, terrible pain that would not be quiet, or dragged herself through weary days.

"You should get out more," Davidson said, when once she told him about it. "No woman can keep well when she mopes indoors all day."

He turned his brown, weather-beaten face to her. "Look at me," he said. "Never a day's illness in my life." And Davidson's Missus had looked and answered nothing. It seemed so hopeless to try to explain to him that it was the pain that made her so cross—the pain that prevented her from being bright as she had been when he married her—the pain that had turned her into a "nagging woman"!

And this morning—because she felt she could bear it no longer—she had told the doctor, and he had said . . . oh, what had he not said? Davidson's Missus had scarcely understood, but the words, "hospital," "operation," and "at once," had struck terror to her simple soul, and still remained with her, turning the beautiful summer morning into hideous night.

What would her husband say when he knew? What would he say if, perhaps, she *died!*

People did die under operations, she knew—often. Mary Simmons, down the road, whom they had only buried a week ago, had died under the surgeon's knife; and now her house already bore the signs of neglect that show where there is not a woman's hand—the children played about in the road in torn, dirty frocks, and Ben Simmons was down at the "Jolly Fishermen" every evening.

Poor Mary! . . . surely, surely, if she knew she would turn in her quiet grave.

And, perhaps, in another week, *she* would be lying beside her!

Perhaps the scrupulous cleanliness of her small home would be marred by dust and neglect.

There were no children to miss her, and that had been another disappointment. Davidson loved children, and Davidson already spent most of his evenings down at the "Jolly Fishermen," so it would not make so very much difference after all if they put her to sleep in the little churchyard, within sight and sound of the sea.

A big tear splashed down on to her lap, followed by another and another.

Oh, what a world it was! so disappointing—so weary!

There was a heavy step on the shell-bordered path leading up the little garden outside, and a hand on the door latch.

It was Davidson, and his Missus hastily dashed away the tears and started to her feet.

He came into the room aglow with health and vigour—this son of the sea—his face and neck burnt to a copper brown against the dark blue of his seaman's jersey.

His splendid, almost rude health only accentuated his wife's pallor and delicacy, and made her appear even more sickly.

Davidson was a handsome man. His wife never looked at him without thinking so, and now, as she rose to meet him, and stood with her hand on a chair-back feeling tired, and weary, and ill all at once, the thought flashed into her mind that it was no wonder every other girl in the village would have had him for the asking.

There was a certain eagerness in his face, too, that reminded her of the way he had turned as she came up the aisle that morning five years ago to marry him—and looked at her.

She remembered, too, the words the doctor had just said to her, and it flashed into her mind: "I will tell Jim now, and ask him to help me to be brave."

But even while she hesitated, the eagerness gave place to a frown, and he said in the old, surly tone in which he so often spoke to her now:

"Crying again! You're always crying. I tell you I'm fair sick of it. Why don't you go out in the sunshine? Anyone'd think I was unkind to yer to look at yer face. Other chaps' wives aren't always mopin' like you! There's too much time on yer hands, that's what!"

The words were not unkindly spoken, but to his wife—ill, and unstrung as she was—there was an underlying taunt, that stung her past bearing.

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"You hate me, I know you do," she flashed out passionately. "Can I help it because I'm weak and sickly? I wasn't like this five years ago when you married me."

Her voice broke suddenly, and she turned from Davidson and sank into a chair. "I wish I was dead. . . . Oh! I wish I was dead," she sobbed. Davidson stood looking helplessly at her for some moments.

He had not meant to be unkind, but, manlike, the sight of tears only angered him. He pushed the door to behind him with a slam, and tilted his cap to a defiant angle on his handsome head

"The young master from the Hall came down this morning. . . . 'E's takin' that new sailin' boat of his for a cruise, and 'as asked me to go along with him. 'It's slack time with you,' he says, 'an' I'll pay yer well if yer'll come.' . . . Of course I says yes. . . . It'll be a matter of six or eight weeks, an' we sail to-morrow mornin' early—Well? . . ."

His wife lifted her head for the first time and looked at him. "You're going?" she asked.

Davidson shifted his pipe to the other corner of his mouth.

"Why don't you go out in the sunshine? Anyone'd think I was unkind to yer to look at yer face."

"The fact is," he said, with short-sighted logic, "we want a rest from each other for a bit. . . . You're sick of the sight o' me, and—"

He looked at his wife and shrugged his broad shoulders. He waited a moment, as if expecting some answer, but beyond a slight shrinking she was silent.

He went on jauntily, in the tone of a man who knows he is about to deliver a blow, and yet is determined not to recognise the fact.

"Yes, I am," he said violently. "An' perhaps when I come back you'll 'ave finished cryin' and be pleased to see me."

The Missus looked away from him across the dancing sea—the sunlight on its blueness seemed to mock her.

"Yes," she said drearily. "When you come back. . . . perhaps I'll 'ave finished cryin'."

* * * * *

"At once," the doctor had said. "At once!"

The words rang in the ears of Davidson's

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Missus through the long summer night, as she lay awake watching the darkness melt into grey dawn, and the dawn into sunlight, unable to sleep from pain—wondering, wondering, wondering.

"You must tell your husband at once," the doctor had said. "And we'll arrange for you to go into the hospital. . . . Or, perhaps, you would like me to speak to him." But Davidson's Missus had said she would rather tell him herself.

And yet now, as she lay awake, listening to her husband's deep, regular breathing, an odd feeling of resentment filled her heart against him.

How little he cared whether she were in pain or not. In another hour he would be off with the young master from the Hall, and perhaps. . . . perhaps she would never see him again.

And if she told him! . . . told him what the doctor had said—if she asked him to stay! . . . would he? . . . She turned feverishly from side to side, unable to answer the question.

And if she did *not* tell him? If she let him go in ignorance of her danger? It only meant keeping silence for another hour, and he would be gone; and when he came back, whether she were alive, or whether she had gone to keep poor Mary Simmons company in the little churchyard, he would perhaps realise that she was not such a poor-spirited creature after all—that she had been brave enough to let him go away and face the terrors of what lay before her—alone.

And at six o'clock when she rose to get her husband's breakfast, Davidson's Missus had made up her mind to let him go—unknowing.

If she died—well, it would be better than dragging through another five years of disappointments.

Davidson ate his breakfast in silence.

Now and again, when she was not looking at him, he cast a furtive glance at his wife's pale face.

He knew she had been awake the greater part of the night, and in spite of the belief which he shared with so many other of his sex, that women's ailments are more than half fancy, he knew that it was not fancy that had made her so white and thin.

She had been plump and smiling when he married her, and the memory was disquieting.

Once—when she refilled his cup, and passed it back to him, their hands touched, and he withdrew his awkwardly with a sense of shame.

Such a great, strong, brown fist his looked beside the frailty of hers, which was white, in spite of the work-roughened fingers.

For the first time it struck him that perhaps he ought to have refused to go with the young master.

He paused with his cup to his mouth to consider.

But after all—he argued with this new idea—he was often away for days at a time, and even weeks, in the fishing season, and there was not so much difference, and it would do them both good to be separated for a bit.

He drained his cup, set it down, and looked at the wooden clock on the shelf.

"Time I was gettin' down," he said awkwardly.

His wife rose from her chair.

"Very well," she said laconically.

He took down his cap, fidgeted with it, and put it back again aimlessly.

"I'll be back in six weeks—p'r'aps less," he said.

"Very well, Jim," said Davidson's Missus quietly.

She went to the door, opened it, and stood looking out across the sea. Davidson followed. He put an affectionate arm about her small person, and drew her to him.

"Good-bye, Little 'Un," he said, going back to the name he had always called her in their courting days. "'Ain't yer goin' to give us a kiss?" For answer Davidson's Missus lifted her face—her lips were quivering. Davidson saw it, and with a man's almost unnatural dread of tears, and what he is pleased to call a "scene," he brushed her lips hastily with his own, caught up his cap, and went off down the path.

And Davidson's Missus went back to the little room.

When Davidson got to the bend in the road that turned off to the little harbour, he looked back towards the cottage—but the door was shut.

"She always used t'wave t'me," he thought, with a sense of discomfort. "But I suppose all wimmen get alike—didn't think *she* would ha' done somehow, though."

He stood for a minute looking back at his small home with its white curtains and geraniums in the window-boxes.

For a second the thought occurred to him that he would go back and see what his Missus was doing, but he dismissed the idea with a shrug of his broad shoulders, and went on his way to the harbour.

The new sailing boat, which the young master from the Hall was so proud of, lay

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rocking gently in the sunshine in the harbour; and at sight of it, and the sea he loved, Davidson shook off the momentary depression that had fallen upon him.

After all, a month—or even six weeks—was no time at all, and when he came back he would be extra kind to Lucy, and maybe take her to town for a day, and cheer her up, and ——

Someone called his name sharply: "Davidson!"

Davidson swung round on his heel. Something in the tone of the voice struck him as being strangely peremptory.

A man was hurrying after him down the cobble-stone quay—a big man with a kind face, a man whom every man, woman, and child in Little Helpton knew and loved—the doctor.

"Mornin', sir," said Davidson.

The doctor answered his greeting shortly.

"I've just come from the Hall," he said. "I understand you were to sail with the young master this morning, so I offered to bring a message, as they are all in such trouble."

"Trouble, sir?" echoed Davidson.

"Yes." There was a pause, and the doctor looked at the man before him with a strange expression. Then he went on abruptly. "The Little Lady's dead. Died last night."

"Good Heavens, sir," said Davidson aghast. He had, like many another of the fishermen, always had a warm corner in his heart for the young master's wife—the "Little Lady" as they had always called her since that day, eighteen months ago, when she had come home as a bride, and they had taken the horses from her carriage and pulled it up to the Hall.

And now she was dead—*dead!*

"Dead, sir," he repeated stupidly. "Why, she wasn't ill."

"There was a little son—born last night," said the doctor gravely.

Davidson's brain began to work slowly. He had heard it said, often, that the young master and the Little Lady got on none too well; that she was left alone a great deal. But that he should have been thinking of leaving her at such a time! That but for this he would actually have gone, struck him as a cowardly thing.

And then, close upon the heels of that thought, came the memory of his own missus' face as she had looked on the previous evening, when he had come in and found her with the tears wet on her cheeks.

"Dead, sir," he repeated stupidly. "Why, she wasn't ill."

He shuffled his feet, and his eyes fell before the straight look of the doctor.

There was a silence.

So the young master had got a son. Davidson felt a sudden pang of jealousy.

He had so often wished that *he* had a son—a little, sturdy chap whom he could take out in the *Little 'Un*, dressed in a blue seaman's jersey—a little chap whom he could teach to swim, and how to sail a boat, and . . .

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Yes—but the young master had lost his wife!

Was it worth the sacrifice?

Davidson thought of his Missus.

The doctor was speaking again.

"I must admit," he was saying tartly, "that I was surprised to hear that you were thinking of going this morning, Davidson. With your wife in the danger she is——" He broke off impatiently. "It seems to me," he added, "that all the married men had better have remained bachelors, and all the bachelors had better have been married men."

Davidson was staring at him stupidly.

"My wife! the Missus in danger, sir?" he said.

"Danger! Yes. I told her yesterday that she must have an operation at once. What! She never told you! You mean she *never told you*. Bless my soul, and I've heard people say that women have no grit."

But Davidson waited to hear no more. He was off the quay, and running up the little street towards the cottage with the white curtains and red geraniums "as if the Old Gentleman himself was after him," as the placid landlady of the "Jolly Fishermen" described it afterwards to a friend.

He went up the little shell-bordered path in two strides, and opened the door of the cottage.

Then he shut it behind him tightly, and stood leaning against it, breathing heavily.

The Missus was half sitting, half lying in a chair, with her arms on the wooden table amongst the breakfast things, and her head on her arms.

Davidson twice tried to find his voice. Then he went forward, and stooping, touched her.

"Little 'Un," he said hoarsely. "Why didn't yer tell me, Little 'Un? Why didn't yer tell me?"

The Missus lifted her face, and there was something in its expression that cut deeper to Davidson's heart than tears could ever have done.

"It didn't matter," she said apathetically. "It wouldn't ha' done no good t' tell you, if I've got to die——"

"But yer haven't—yer haven't got t' die," said Davidson, a sob of fear in his deep voice. "You'll get well, and we'll start again, Lucy, and be like we was when we was first married, and I'll never be a brute to you again, Little 'Un, I never will, if you'll only say as you'll get well."

And looking at her husband's face, with its tender concern and overwhelming fear for her safety, something seemed to tell Davidson's Missus that, even as the darkest moment is just before dawn, so she had gone through her dark night, and that now the sun was going to break for her. And Davidson put his big arms round her, and drew her head to rest against his rough jersey, bending his face to hers.

"Say as you'll get well—as you won't leave me, Little 'Un," he repeated, his voice shaking—and Davidson's Missus said it.

IMPROPER PRIDE.

Sylvia, arrayed in velvet,
Never showed the slightest pride,
Nor disdained to walk in town with
Me in homespun by her side—
Had you called her vain I should have
Told you flatly that you lied.

Yesterday she passed me, and of
Recognition gave no hint,
Looking prouder than a peacock—
You'd have thought she owned the Mint—
Just because, if you'll believe me,
Lately she's appeared in print!

Ada Leonora Harris.

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THE FAYREST LADYE

The Story of an Artist's Ideal.

By Owen Oliver.

When I went to South Africa I left Jack Lessing a penniless painter with fifty ideals of art, and fifty pictures that would not sell. When I came back two years later I found him in palatial chambers and lauded as the poster-artist of the age. When he bounded from his chair and grasped my hand—he always had an infernal grip—I knew that the change was only in Jack's fortunes, and not in Jack.

"You old humbug!" I cried, as I pumped his arm. "The preacher of art for art's sake become a poster man! Prosperous—and fat! Good old Jack!"

"I may be prosperous," he admitted, nearly breaking my arm, "but I'm hanged if I'm adipose. *You* needn't talk! You've made money yourself."

"I never professed business for business' sake," I asserted, with a laugh; "and I haven't made much. It's good to meet again, old chap."

"Better than good!" He pushed me into the cosiest chair, and gave me a whisky and a cigar. "Yes, I've struck oil. It's queer how a fellow's luck comes."

"Awfully queer." I lit the cigar. "It's an absurd world. Wouldn't buy *The Fayrest Ladye* for a fiver; and pays a fortune for two or three dauby posters."

"It's absurd," he agreed; "but you evidently haven't seen the posters."

"No. I came up at night, and I haven't taken my eyes from the people; the dear English people! Well—the posters?"

"They aren't daubs. That's the worst of it. They're The Fayrest Ladye; turned into a healthy modern miss. Upon my word, Tom, she's fairer than ever! And—" He sighed. "She's an advertisement for Optima!"

"What the deuce is that?" I asked.

"A kind of tea. It's one and eight a pound and a coupon for a teapot—when you've got twelve. They call it the Optipot!"

"Tea!" I laughed. "Well, it might have been worse!"

"Yes! She started as Soap. They ordered her really, but they backed out. So I tried Pills and Sauce and Blacking; and ended as Tea! The tea is just drinkable. The posters—Man, she's gorgeous!"

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"Got them here?" I asked.

He nodded at the wall behind me, and I turned and saw two framed posters. I jumped up and stared at them.

The first was a picture of a lady; and such a lady! Tearfully indignant, vixenish and delightful. She had jumped from her chair, dropping her book on the floor of a cosy sitting-room, and was facing the doorway indicated on the extreme edge of the picture. In the doorway you saw the hands, feet, and one knee of a man who feared to enter. The knee seemed to shake, the shuffling feet had ruffled the carpet, and his hands were outspread in deprecation. "You've forgotten the Optima!" was the legend in huge black letters.

The second was the same lady—what a lady!—smiling, ready to be kissed, and still delightful! The man again was only hands and feet and a knee; but the knee was firm, the feet were planted on the carpet as if they owned it; and the hands held out two ugly red and black packets. "I've remembered the Optima!" was inscribed at the top of the poster.

"By Jove!" I cried. "By *Jove!* She's—beyond words! . . . The *beauty!*" I rubbed my chin and stared at her.

"*Isn't* she?" said Lessing. He laughed softly.

"Where did you get her from?" I demanded, turning this way and that to view the two faces. I couldn't make up my mind whether she was more bewitching when she smiled or when she frowned.

"Out of my head," he asserted.

"But, man!" I protested incredulously.

"It's a fact," he asserted. "As a whole, that is. In detail I stole her. They're Em's eyes and Judy's eyelashes." They were his cousins. "It's Lily Lang's forehead, and Mrs. Jackson's nose, and Mrs. Carter's little pink ear. The hair's a Miss—What's her name? The girl we played tennis with at Deal? Saintsbury. Yes, that's it. I saw the blouse at a *matinée* and pencilled it on the programme. They're the doctor's wife's hands, and I borrowed a pair of your mater's shoes—she has such jolly little feet! The obstinate chin is her very own, and the dimple on it; and her mouth; and the 'way of her.' She's my Fayrest Ladye! The dream of an artist when—when he wasn't a poster man. Well, I'll never see her."

"Never," I agreed.

And then a maid knocked at the door.

"Mr. Smith and Miss Smith wish to see you, sir," she announced.

"Smith, eh?" He grinned. "I seem to know the name, Mary! I don't remember anyone of the name that attracts me particularly, though. I don't want to see them."

"I daresay not," snapped a truculent voice from the passage; and in bustled a very small, very thin, very red-faced, very bristling little man of about sixty. "My name is Smith. John Smith, sir. Of New York. I'll have the law on you if there's any law in this one-horse country. The law, sir!" He banged Lessing's table with his fist.

"If you'll compose yourself," Lessing began good-humouredly; and then his voice seemed to freeze, and then the rest of him. For there, standing in the doorway, was—Optima! A little larger, perhaps, much more dignified, and entirely lacking the dimple on the chin; an Optima slower, one would fancy, to smile or to frown, but still Optima.

Lessing was too staggered to offer her a chair. So I acted as host. She bowed to me courteously, but waved it aside, and turned to her father.

"You can come to the law afterwards," she said in a pretty, indignant voice—the voice of a woman who had been admired all her life. "The first thing is Mr. Lessing's explanation."

"Yes," the little man agreed. "Yes, Angela." The beauty evidently ruled him. "Explain how you came by my daughter's portrait, sir! How you dared to put her in your villainous daubs of posters; on every dirty wall. My daughter! Optima Tea!" He dashed his hat and stick on the table and shook his fist. "Explain, sir! . . . How is it that we find my daughter's portrait on every hoarding; beside soap and beer and patent medicine? The very waiters at the hotel grinning at her and whispering! My daughter held up to ridicule. Optima!" He gave a regular yell, and almost danced with rage. "If I were a younger man——"

"Hush, father," said the girl. "If Mr.—er—Lessing has a sister, or a friend whom he respects—assuming——" She curled her lip—"that he is capable of respecting a lady's feelings—he knows what he has done. You do not look very proud of yourself, Mr. Lessing!"

Lessing drew a deep breath and rested his knuckles on the table.

"Madam," he said, "I have never seen you before, or a portrait of you. I did not know that you existed—except in my mind."

The fiery old man picked up his hat, and dashed it on the table again.

"I said he'd try that yarn first, Angela," he

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observed triumphantly. "Well, we don't accept that explanation, sir. Try the next!"

Lessing flushed furiously.

"If you *were* a younger man," he began.

"Tut, tut!" I interrupted. "Mr. Smith is very naturally annoyed; and Miss Smith is very naturally distressed. If you had known my friend Lessing for as many years as I have known him, Mr. Smith, it could not possibly occur to you to doubt his word. I grant that it seems inconceivable that he should have imagined such a lady. It seemed inconceivable to *me;* but I accepted his word, knowing him. . . . Artists have ideals of beauty beyond the understanding of ordinary mortals."

"Oh—h!" said Miss Smith. "And make them into posters? Not that I accept it as an 'ideal of beauty.'"

Nevertheless, I could see that I had not displeased her.

"I was speaking for myself," I continued calmly. "No. They don't usually turn them into posters. I don't suppose Lessing wanted to. It started as a very idealistic picture—*The Fayrest Ladye*. Do you keep it in that old nest of drawers still, Lessing?"

"It's only a daub," he objected, "in comparison with this."

"The ideal is never equal to the real," I stated. I glanced from the posters to Miss Smith.

"You are a man of tact," she said sarcastically; but the sarcasm was tempered by a faint glimmer of smile that would not be suppressed. "Mr.——?"

"Morton," I said, "Tom Morton, and very much at your service . . . Here's the Fayrest Ladye. She's ideal enough for you, isn't she?"

"Chiefly bones," Miss Smith observed.

"Like you looked after you had the fever, Angel," said her father. "Someone must have photographed you. If I got hold of him——!"

"You have Mr. Lessing's word that he had no photograph," I interposed. "So that question does not arise. Well, he drew this picture of the Fayrest Ladye; the ideal lady who was always in his mind; and when he undertook to do a poster he naturally drew her——"

"If his nature is such that he makes his ideals into tea advertisements," she interrupted.

"Since he wished to do his very best to make money," I explained, "his mother having lost her little all, and having few years left before her . . . I'll be candid with you. I have only just returned from abroad, and he hasn't told me his reasons. Knowing him and his mother's loss, I have guessed them."

I looked at him, and he nodded.

"Well," I concluded, "that's the history of it. You must discuss the rest with him. May I say, for myself, that I sympathise exceedingly with you."

The old man nodded; and the beauty gave me a grateful little smile.

"You'll have every poster taken down," old Smith told Lessing; "every single one, or I'll prosecute you."

"They are not mine to take down," Lessing answered. "I have sold the copyright to the company."

"I'll proceed against the company," the old man went on; "and you too. I don't believe a word——"

"Hush, father!" the girl cried quickly. "Of course, you—we—believe Mr. Morton, don't we?"

The truculent old man softened under her touch on his arm.

"If you think so, Angel," he said, "I suppose we do. But I'll prosecute *somebody!*"

"In the meanwhile," she said, "I suppose"—she turned to me—"I suppose you could induce Mr. Lessing to promise not to put me—the idea that is rather like me—into any *more* posters, Mr. Morton?"

"My influence will not be necessary," I asserted. I dug Lessing in the side sharply. "Speak up, man," I muttered. But he went red and pulled his moustache.

"I—I've sold them a third one," he confessed. "It's just coming out. In fact, I—I believe they began putting it up yesterday!"

There was a momentous silence.

"I suppose one more or less does not make so very much difference?" I suggested. "You see they hire a certain number of spaces, and when they put up one poster they take down another."

"They're hiring more spaces," said Lessing. "You see the three make a set."

"A set?" the girl asked quickly. "What is the new one?"

"She's having tea with—with her husband," Lessing owned unwillingly.

The old man picked up his stick; and the girl stamped her foot.

"It is unbearable!" she cried. "Unbearable! It is bad enough to be labelled all my life as a quack tea! But to be labelled in company with a—a—some *bounder!*"

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She stamped her foot again. "Come along, daddy. We'll go back to America. Where they know how to treat their women; and—" She turned upon poor old Lessing like a little fury. "If your vile posters appear in America our men will know how to treat them—and you!"

She caught at her father's arm, and dragged him away. He turned in the doorway and shook his stick. "If ever you come to the States," he roared, "you'll be lynched; and if there's any justice in this rotten country—!" He went redder and redder and seemed to swell; but his daughter tugged at him.

"Come along, daddy!" she repeated with a suppressed sob; and they went. I ran after them, and opened the front door, and bowed them out.

"I am so very, very sorry," I told her; and she turned on the step and held out her hand.

"Thank you!" she said. "*You* have been nice."

When I went back to the sitting-room, Lessing was staring out of the window. I forced a laugh. He turned round and looked at me; and I stopped trying to laugh it off. For I saw as plain as a pikestaff that Lessing had fallen in love with her—or rather that he had always been in love with the "Fayrest Ladye" whom he had fashioned in his mind. It seems a ridiculous thing; but writers and artists and all their kind do things like that.

"She'll get over it, old man," I consoled him. "Women are curious creatures. I'll bet you a hat that, in a week, she'll have transferred her hatred to the 'husband' in the last poster. By the way, who is he?"

Lessing dropped feebly into a chair.

"Myself!" he said.

I searched my mind for words to express myself; and, finding nothing adequate in our modern vocabulary, went back to Shakespeare.

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us," I cried.

"I think I'll go abroad," he observed; "or drown myself; or both."

"Try going abroad first," I suggested. "If you like I'll come with you. Anyhow you'd better clear out of here sharp. As soon as he sees it he'll come round and try to murder you!"

"I wish he would!" Lessing groaned. "To have found her, and—Oh! I wish he would!"

"Don't be a fool!" I exhorted him. "Hang it all, you owe the poor girl something; and you don't want to mix her up in further unpleasantness, and draw more attention to the business. Just pack up your traps and come home with me; and to-morrow I'll go round to see the old chap—his address is on the card—and try to pacify him a bit."

Lessing packed up—or rather I packed up for him—and came home with me. On the way we saw a man putting up the new poster. "We'll always have Optima!" The loving couple were sitting at a table pledging each other in cups of the stuff. They looked distinctly affectionate; and they were the very images of Lessing and Miss Smith.

I had an awful evening with him. He had lost his "Fayrest Ladye" for ever, he lamented, and he didn't care what happened to him. I tried to argue that she was quite different from the poster lady, because she was bigger and more dignified, and had no dimple on the chin; but he got so furious that I gave up argument, and tried bad language instead. It didn't even rouse him to answer back.

In the morning I called upon Mr. Smith. He was out; but Miss Angela saw me. I began to tell her about Lessing's grief over the matter, but she wouldn't listen.

"I have seen the poster," she said, "and it won't bear talking about. Father and I are leaving England to-morrow. There is nothing else to be done. I am branded for life."

"It's not such an ugly brand," I suggested. "Optima—the best of womankind. That is what the word means, you know, and—no, I won't try any mendacious consolation. It is horrid for you, Miss Smith. I am sorrier than I can say. I am sorry for Lessing too. He is a chivalrous chap, and he wouldn't hurt a woman for worlds. You have no idea how badly he feels about it; and it really isn't his fault."

"It *is* his fault," she contradicted. "He had an ideal; and he degraded it. Incidentally he has degraded me; and the degradation takes a form that associates me with him. So I have a double reason for hating him."

I failed to move her from that position, though she was good enough to say that I had been very kind, and that her hatred did not extend to my unworthy self. In fact I judged that, if we had met in an ordinary way, we should probably have been good friends. I was rather inclined to think that friendship was possible, even under present circumstances; but I felt that Lessing had the first call, and that I was bound to give him his chance before I tried mine. Hatred isn't a bad preparation for love, and I thought that, if I could bring them together for a bit,

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she might give up her objection to being associated with him. If she didn't, it wouldn't matter so much to him if she were associated with me. So I cast about in my mind for a way of throwing them together.

I noticed that a handbook of "The *Corsair* Cruises" was lying on the table; and I concluded that they were probably taking one. On my road home I got a handbook for myself. I found that a vessel of the same line was starting from Southampton on the following day, taking passengers to join the *Corsair* at Marseilles for the next cruise. I induced Lessing to go by it. I did not tell him my reasons.

I caught a glimpse of the Smiths at Waterloo, but I hurried Lessing into a smoker, and sat on the side away from the platform. When we were aboard I kept him in our cabin unpacking till the ship had started. We were five miles out when all encountered on the promenade.

I thought that the old man would have thrown him overboard at first; and Lessing seemed prepared to be put over without resistance. So I dealt with the matter for him. I pointed out that Lessing couldn't possibly have known that they were coming; that the very purpose of his journey was to avoid them; that it was very unlikely that anyone aboard would have seen the new poster yet; and that, anyhow, it was no use making matters worse by a scene. Miss Smith supported me in that; but she gave me one or two looks that made me feel uncomfortable for myself as well as for Lessing.

Finally, Mr. Smith accepted Lessing's assurance that he had no idea of meeting them, and would not approach them during the voyage, and would abandon the cruise and go home overland from Marseilles.

"It is the least that I can do," he said mournfully.

I met Miss Smith on deck the next morning. She hesitated, but finally acknowledged me. I promptly stepped up to her.

"I am not included in the taboo?" I suggested.

"You *weren't*," she said; "but after yesterday—!" She looked at me meaningly.

"Yes," I admitted. "I guessed that you

On the way we saw a man putting up the new poster.

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Lessing had staggered against the music-room.

were coming. I saw the handbook on your table. I thought that, once you knew the poor chap, you might forgive him."

"And now," she retorted, "you know that I shall not. Suppose it was your sister that—that——"

"I know," I interrupted. "I know! Some women wouldn't mind it, Miss Smith, really. They'd be rather pleased, I think; but—it's a matter of taste. If it were my sister, I should prefer her to feel about it as you do—as I do. Still, he didn't hurt you intentionally, and wouldn't. Won't you forgive him?"

"No," she said. "And it isn't 'won't.' It's 'can't.' I *can't*, Mr. Morton."

"Then," I said, "will you forgive *me*—if you can?"

"I *can*," she said, smiling mischievously.

"And will?"

"Ye—es," she said; "but I am very cross," and then she laughed.

We became good friends, and we became good friends very quickly, but I wasn't happy. I couldn't court her before Lessing's eyes, or without having it out with him, though I knew that, once he was convinced that he had no chance, he wouldn't be a dog in the manger. Still, I thought he'd feel it badly, and I was fond of the chap, very fond of him. Finally, I suggested that we should both get off at Gibraltar, and he agreed. When I mentioned this to the "Fayrest Ladye" she seemed very displeased with me, and when I asked if she wanted him to stop, she was furious, and wouldn't speak to me all the evening, which was the last one. Her father and Lessing were like bears with sore heads. So I wasn't specially comfortable.

When we were in the harbour next morning I went to take my leave. I meant to get a word alone with her, and ask where I might hope to meet her again; but old Smith was there, and Lessing was near—I think with the intention of offering a final apology. So I started with a commonplace inquiry whether she was going ashore to see the place.

"Yes," she said coldly. "But we are waiting to see if my aunt and cousin come aboard. They were staying at Tangier, and father cabled to ask them to join us."

"Some people have come on by the other gangway," I told her. "It is round here. Let me show you."

We walked through the saloon entrance At the top of the stairs a girl rushed forward laughing. I believe that I stared at her with my mouth open. For *she* was the real Optima! There was no mistaking her. She was *exact*, even to the dimple on the chin!

"Oh, Angel!" she cried. "Dear old

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uncle! Mum! They're *here!* We've been hunting all over the ship, and . . . What is the matter with that gentleman? He's ill!"

Lessing had staggered against the music-room, and seemed to be slowly slipping down. Optima—the *real* Optima—made a dart and caught him by one arm. I seized him by the other.

"Brandy!" cried old Smith. "Hi, steward! Fetch some brandy. Don't stand gaping like a fool. . . . Why, of course, Angela!" He nodded at the cousin. "Why didn't you think of it. It isn't you. It's Mabel. All this fuss for nothing! Bring the brandy here."

The brandy pulled him round—or the sight of the new Miss Smith, whose name was Mabel.

"You've got—a dimple—on your chin!" he told her vacantly.

"Well," said her mother cheerfully, "there's no harm in that. Drink a little more." She was acting as nurse-in-chief. "He's wandering in his head, poor fellow!" she whispered to us.

"No," I whispered back. "The dimple is all-important. I'll tell you presently."

When Lessing was himself again we went and sat on deck. Everybody had gone ashore, so we had it to ourselves. And I told them the story.

Mabel and her mother kept laughing all the time. It was a huge joke they evidently thought, and Mabel was rather proud of being a poster lady.

"I can fancy Angela's horror!" she cried. "You proper old Angel! And you're sure it's more like me? Because we are *fearfully* alike."

"It *is* you," Lessing declared with conviction.

"Not a doubt of it," I agreed. "And since you don't mind—or your mother—?"

"It's no use minding!" Aunt Mary observed. She was a jolly old soul.

"It's rather fun!" said Mabel.

"Mr. Morton only looks at his friend's side of the case," observed Miss Angela, with a vicious glance at me. "He hasn't told you about the new poster."

"No—o," I agreed; and then I told them. Even the reckless Mabel looked a little staggered on this occasion.

"I say, Mr. Lessing," she remarked. "It's rather—rather awkward, you know. It is really!"

"Very awkward," her mother agreed.

"You see," I apologised, "he couldn't possibly know. It was an idea that he always had—an artist's ideal of beauty, and——"

"Oh! Mr. Morton!" cried Mabel. "You make me blush!"

And blush she did very prettily; and then Lessing found his tongue.

"The question," he said, "is, will you forgive me; or—or am I to go?"

"Oh!" cried Mabel. "We—we couldn't blame him because he—he wasn't a very good judge of beau—I mean of looks. Could we mother?"

"Or because he was!" I said. "Send your baggage back to the cabin, old man."

He rushed off to see about his traps; and I managed to get a word with Angela alone at last.

"About *my* baggage?" I asked.

"*You* were going of your own accord," she answered. Her voice wasn't very steady.

"No," I denied. "I was loyal to my friend."

"To *one* of your friends," she corrected.

"I intended to ask the other friend where I might hope to meet her again . . . When it wouldn't hurt him so much. Didn't you understand, Angela?"

"No," she cried. "I didn't. I *didn't*. I thought it was because you didn't want to grow too—too friendly—with a poster!"

"Angela," I said, "did you care?" She nodded. "Very much?" She nodded again. "Will you marry me?"

"They're calling us for the boat," she protested, and hurried away blushing rosily; but as we walked down the gangway, she glanced at me for a moment.

"Yes," she whispered.

"Oh!" I whispered. "My fayrest ladye!"

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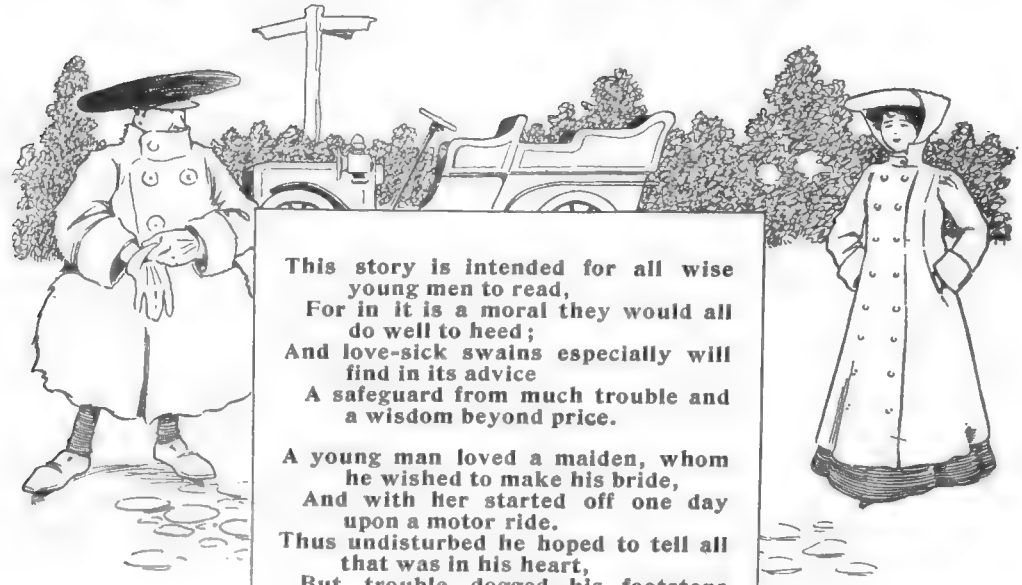
THE MAID, THE MAN, AND THE MOTOR.

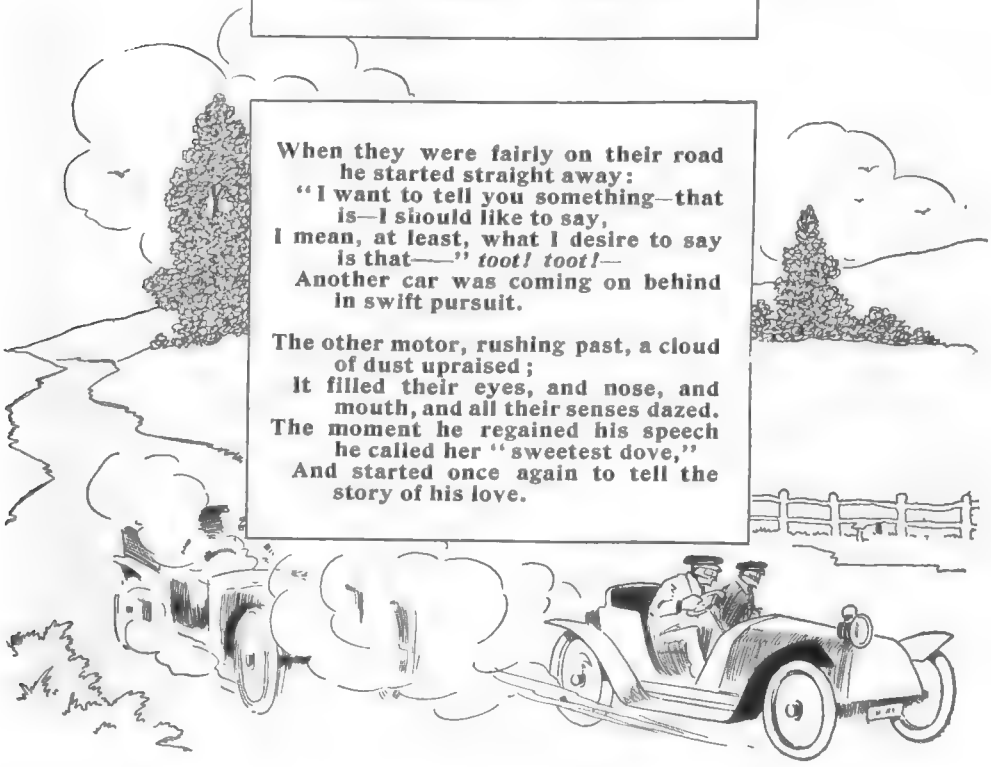


This story is intended for all wise
young men to read,
For in it is a moral they would all
do well to heed;
And love-sick swains especially will
find in its advice
A safeguard from much trouble and
a wisdom beyond price.

A young man loved a maiden, whom
he wished to make his bride,
And with her started off one day
upon a motor ride.
Thus undisturbed he hoped to tell all
that was in his heart,
But trouble dogged his footsteps
from the moment of the start.

When they were fairly on their road
he started straight away:
"I want to tell you something—that
is—I should like to say,
I mean, at least, what I desire to say
is that——" *toot! toot!*—
Another car was coming on behind
in swift pursuit.

The other motor, rushing past, a cloud
of dust upraised;
It filled their eyes, and nose, and
mouth, and all their senses dazed.
The moment he regained his speech
he called her "sweetest dove,"
And started once again to tell the
story of his love.



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He told her: "As this motor-car is
throbbing 'neath our feet,
E'en so for you my faithful heart
will never cease to beat;
And as this motor pauses not, so, too,
my love would be——"
Just then the precious motor jerked,
and stopped dead instantly.

Exactly how to start the thing he
really did not know.
He took it all to pieces, yet it still
refused to go.
The lady grew impatient at the weari-
some delay,
And every minute saw his chances
fading fast away.

At last there came a savage grunt,
and like the swiftest wind
The motor started off alone, and left
them both behind.
They found it stuck fast in the hedge,
a mile or more away,
And could not extricate it though
they worked hard all the day.

When in the twilight he proposed,
she promptly answered "No"——
Young men, beware of motors if
a-wooing you should go;
No matter how impatient or how much
in love you are,
Don't tell the lady of your love when
in a motor-car.

Herbert J. Brandon.

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The Curate

The Admirable Crichton of the Parish.

By P. H. Ditchfield.

The curate is an important person in every parish. His energies are vast, and many duties devolve upon him. He captains the village cricket team and keeps up his wicket at a critical juncture in the matches. He may be depended upon to hold his own in a tennis tournament, and is at the beck and call of everyone for all kinds of services which lie outside the duties of his profession. He has been known to rank among the superior clergy, if the saying of a Master of Trinity be true: "No one is infallible, not even the youngest curate amongst us." Sometimes, spoilt by the general attention which he invariably receives, he is inclined to be a little superior.

One of the characters of a well-known opera sings:

I was a pale young curate then,

who received presents of worked slippers and comforters from the admiring ladies of his congregation. If stage curates are still pale, it is because they are hopelessly out of date.

It was all quite correct in the days of Dickens, when the advice was given to Charles Honeyman to cough during the prayers, "because the women like a consumptive parson, sir."

The modern typical curate has been described as a smart, clean, well-set-up youth, with face closely shaved and hair cut short. He no longer wears, except on occasions of state, a decayed "topper," and a long coat with buttons as numerous as the Articles of the Church of England. In his daily avocation he wears a short, round jacket, a silver watch-chain crossing his waistcoat, dark trousers turned up at the bottoms, serviceable shooting-boots, and a black straw hat.

He has an air, indescribable and unmistakable, of having lived an out-of-door life, and, even though his present life be cast in a slum, he looks as if he only required a few weeks' training to regain the physical trim in which he left Oxford or Cambridge.

The affectionate regard of the ladies of the congregation for the curate has often been the subject of epigrammatic remark. Perhaps the wittiest is the well-known rhyme:

The ladies praise the curate's eyes—
I never see their light divine;
For when he prays he closes his,
And when he preaches closes mine.

His prospects have improved since the beginning of the last century, when Sydney Smith thus described his peculiarities:

"A curate—there is something which excites compassion in the very name of a curate! A learned man in a hovel, with sermons and saucepans, lexicons and bacon, Hebrew books and ragged children; good and patient; a comforter and a preacher; the first and purest pauper of the hamlet."

Things have changed since then. The curate can no longer be described as a "learned man in a hovel," though his lodgings may not be very pretentious, nor does he seem to live in an atmosphere of lexicons and Hebrew books. He is learned in the annals of Henley, and deep in the lore of University competitions. He can tell you

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how many centuries "W. G." has scored, if they can be computed by ordinary arithmetic, and adorns his walls with photographs of distinguished cricketers.

His mistakes, born of inexperience, have often been recorded and laughed over. A curate was once giving out the banns of two couples who hoped to be married, and rather astonished the congregation by saying (instead of the usual formula, "This is the first, second, or third time of asking"), "The first are last and the last first!" Another curate of an important church in Kensington asked for the prayers of the congregation for "a family crossing the Atlantic, and for other sick persons."

Another, when asked by his bishop to write a sermon on "Plain and practical arguments for infant baptism," produced the following weird statement:

At one time curates are said to have——

"In ancient times, when people bathed their whole bodies, baptism by immersion was usual; but in the present day, when people only wash their hands and faces, baptism by sprinkling or effusion is considered sufficient." Evidently he was no advocate of the morning tub.

Our readers will doubtless be familiar with that stupendous work, Bishop Butler's "Analogy of Religion." It is one of the works which candidates for Holy Orders have to study in order to satisfy their examiners. A curate, with other candidates for priest's orders, was staying with the bishop at his palace, but, alas! failed to pass his examination, being rather deficient in the knowledge of this difficult book.

Before leaving the palace the bishop spoke a few kind words to him, expressing the hope that he would present himself at the next ordination, and be able then to pass satisfactorily. "Don't forget the Butler," said the bishop with a parting smile. "Oh, no, my lord, that is all right. I gave him half-a-crown this morning," was the surprising answer.

American bishops sometimes seem to be unduly severe on budding ecclesiastics. Perhaps they think that it is good for young men to have their conceit removed. A conceited young curate once said to an American prelate: "Do you not think that I may well feel flattered that so great a crowd came to hear me preach?" "No," was the answer, "for twice as many would have come to see you hanged."

"Don't forget the Butler," said the bishop with a parting smile. "Oh, no, my lord, that is all right. I gave him half-a-crown this morning."

The modern curate is very modern, if the story be true that having become addicted to the use of the telephone, and wishing to announce in church "Hymn 660," he astonished the faithful by giving out "Hymn double-six-oh." This tale belongs to the same category as the one about another telephoning parson, who gave out "Hymn 6-3-4 Gerrard," and is really a near relation of the stories about the sporting curate who announced "the collect for the last Sunday before the Derby," and of that other cricketing curate who remarked: "Here endeth the second innings," and of the parish clerk, who was the village umpire, who shouted when roused from his sleep in the course of a hot afternoon service "Over," instead of "Amen," and of the golfing curate who assured his hearers of the futility of gaining everything else if they lost the last hole. Some of these stories are doubtless apocryphal.

Curates' sermons have not always received unstinted praise, and, if a young cleric is not particularly gifted, it is somewhat difficult for him to produce one or two discourses every Sunday which would satisfy the demands of a critical congregation.

——received presents of worked slippers and comforters from the admiring ladies of his congregation.

Some curates might with advantage copy the example of Sir Roger de

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Coverley's chaplain; when asked by the squire, "Who preaches on the morrow?" he replied: "The Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon." He had a list of preachers for the whole year, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Sanderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calarry, and other eminent authors contributing sermons, which were delivered with "handsome elocution."

A Welsh curate adopted a novel expedient for the disguising of purloined discourses. A friend of his, having listened to a surprising series of sermons, asked him how he managed to prepare such erudite compositions. The curate replied:

"You see, I have a volume of sermons by one Tillotson, and a very good book it is; so I translate one of them into Welsh, and then back again into English; after which the author himself would not know it again."

A curate was once preaching, and was pointing out the unworthy motives which guided some people in the matter of church attendance. He remarked: "Some people come to church to show off their best clothes; but I am thankful to see that none of you, dear friends, can have come for that purpose." This unintentional criticism on dress caused some fluttering in female dovecotes.

The curate in these days usually gains promotion by his hard work and zealous labours.

Another, who delighted in extempore sermons, advised his hearers: "Let not the world rob you of peace, which it can neither give nor take away"; and another spoke of "cities now so utterly perished that it is doubtful whether they ever existed."

Yet another curate, who was leading the singing in the Sunday school, called out: "Now, children, we must have 'Little drops of water,' and this time do put a little spirit into it."

Mixed metaphors have caused trouble to curates. One of the race exclaimed from the pulpit: "Is there a spark of grace in any heart here? Water it! Water it!"

Young curates sometimes imagine that their opinions on church matters are fully and irrevocably formed, and that they have solved all the difficult problems relating to ecclesiastical government and ritual. Perhaps they received a rude shock one day when they saw an advertisement for a curate in the *Guardian*, inserted by a quaint and original rector, ending with the words—"Views, *if any*, moderate."

An archdeacon of my acquaintance was, like other prominent clerics, once a curate, and he married his first rector's sister, a lady twenty years his senior. As years went on the disparity between their ages more clearly manifested itself. Dining out one evening with his wife, he was asked by his host's butler his name. He gave it as "the Venerable Archdeacon B—— and Mrs. B——." They were duly announced in the drawing-room: "Archdeacon B—— and the Venerable Mrs. B——," a distinction to which the lady was clearly entitled.

The curate in these days usually gains promotion by his hard work and zealous labours, while the amazing activities of the old-time curate are well set forth in Dean Swift's verses on one of his colleagues, who is made to say:

I marched three miles through scorching sand,
With zeal in heart and notes in hand;
I rode four more to great St. Mary,
Using four legs when two were weary.
To three fair virgins I did tie men
In the close bonds of pleasing Hymen;
I dipped two babes in holy water,
And purified their mothers after.
Within an hour and eke a half
I preached three congregations deaf,
Which, thundering out with lungs long-winded,
I chopped so fast that few were minded.
My emblem the laborious sun,
Saw all these mighty labours done
Before one race of his was run.
All this performed by Robert Hewit;
What mortal else could e'er go through it?

We may contrast this picture of the old-time curate with that drawn by a modern bard of his successor. Mr. Harold Begbie sings his praises in no slender or false tones:

Where the footlights flame not, where life goes maimed and dumb,
He keeps a candle burning in dog-hole and in slum;
And in the noisome garret, beside the squalid bed,
His fingers smooth the pillow for the dying docker's head.

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Charity Covereth—

Told by Miss Gladys Stanford,
Aged Thirteen and a half.

Edited by
Ethel Stefana Stevens.

It was just a fortnight before our bazaar in Aid of Distressed Governesses. Lady Rivers was the originator of the idea. She had said to the Rector: "Dear Mr. Grahame, it would be so nice if you were to get up a bazaar in aid of these poor souls! You are so splendid at organising charitable works!" Of course Mr. Grahame jolly well had no choice after that, particularly as she had just paid off the remainder of the organ debt.

Bethia and I were decidedly pleased about the bazaar, not so much on the distressed governesses' account as on our own. Nothing ever happens in Milchester except hockey matches twice a year, the annual hunt ball, cinematographs and myrioramas in the public hall, the annual amateur concert and Lady Rivers' garden party. We only come in over the hockey matches and cinematographs, as we're under age.

Dorothy Rivers was coming home from Brussels for good, just in time for the bazaar, and we were looking forward to this frightfully, because, though she is seventeen (three years and a half older than Bethia and me—Bethia's my twin), she is as chummy as can be, and fearfully decent to us. She makes a good centre forward, too, and is a member of the Milchester Hockey Club. Another good thing about Dorothy is that she always has boxes and boxes of chocolate, which she carries round with her.

As I was telling you, it was a fortnight before the bazaar was to come off. Mr. Grahame came in to see father, and asked him if he would allow his two daughters to assist at Mrs. Grahame's stall, and father called us into his study and said: "Kiddies, how would you like to help in the bazaar?"

Mr. Grahame looked a little shocked. (He told Mrs. Doulton-Damer one day that Colonel Stanford "brought up those twins disgracefully, just like stable-boys!")

So, in order to protect dad, Bethia said in her society manner: "We shall be charmed, Mr. Grahame."

I said: "But how?"

He told us by selling flowers and raffling three Persian kittens, and things like that.

"H'm," I remarked, "I don't call that very original, do you?"

Mr. Grahame smiled in a silly sort of way.

"Gladys means," Bethia explained, "that we might think out something of our own."

"Certainly, certainly!" Mr. Grahame said. "Any good ideas will be welcome. Only I think they had better be submitted to me for approval before they are finally adopted. You see, I am responsible to Lady Rivers."

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There seemed some sense in this, and we agreed. Though Lady Rivers is a dear to us, she has a nasty, sarcastic way of making people feel cheap when they displease her.

Father then took Mr. Grahame out to see the new retriever pups, and we went back to the schoolroom.

The next day we had quite a grand inspiration. You know the gipsy wheels they have at railway stations? Well, our idea was to make a big cardboard dial with a number of fortunes written all round it, and two cardboard clock-hands, which could be swung round on a tin wheel from behind. Bethia, who is very dark, was to carry the disc like a shield, and push the hands round for sixpence a time. She was to be dressed like a gipsy and blindfolded, so that she could not see the clock-hands as she moved them. I was to lead her round. It was rather generous of me to let her be the gipsy, I think, but I stipulated that she should let me have most of Dorothy in exchange.

We rushed round to the rectory directly after lunch and got old Grahame's consent. He made us promise, however, that we should submit the thing to Dorothy before we inked it in and coloured it.

Dorothy arrived three days afterwards, just as we were cutting out the hands in the schoolroom. We both flew to her and hugged her, and then called: "Oh, Dorothy, you *have* grown pretty!"

"Do you *really* think so?" Dorothy said, peeping up into the big glass and settling her hat again (such a duck of a hat!).

"Have some cake," Bethia said hospitably.

"No, thank you," Dorothy answered. "Would you girls like some *bon-bons?*" She held out a heavenly box of French chocolates.

We did not need a second invitation. "Aren't you going to have some?" I asked, surprised.

"No," Dorothy said sadly, "I have got to think of my figure. I've brought myself down to three chocolates a day," she explained, sitting on the table and swinging her feet, with one arm round me and one round Bethia.

"Oh, Dorothy," I said reproachfully. "You're getting grown up!"

Dorothy looked very important. "Look here, Gladys and Bethia," she said, "I'll tell you a secret."

"Oh, *what* is it?" Bethia gasped breathlessly. "Is it a Belgian officer or a student? Three holidays ago, Dorothy, you——"

Dorothy got quite red. "Rubbish, children," she said loftily. "This is the secret. I'm—going—to—put—my hair up—to-morrow!"

"Is that all?" I said, disappointed.

Dorothy laughed and sighed. "I shall *really* be grown up then."

"Won't you play centre forward any more?" I asked.

"Will you be presented?" Bethia seconded.

"Will you have a coming-out dance?"

"Will you go up to London?"

Dorothy nodded to everything. "Yes," she said, "of course. But I'll always play centre forward, Gladys, when I come down here in the winter. My coming-out dance is to be the night after the bazaar. And I'm to go up to town with my Aunt Felicita afterwards, and I'm to be presented at the next Drawing Room."

We sat still and said nothing.

Then—"A precious lot you'll think of us," Bethia burst out bitterly. "And it's five years before father will let us go up to London to be presented. We are going to school in Paris first. Perhaps we shall never see you again!"

"Oh, of course, I shall be here all the autumn with mother," Dorothy said consolingly. "And you must come up to tea every other day."

"It is *rotten* being so young," Bethia observed gloomily.

"It's far *more* rotten being grown up, I should think," I objected hotly.

"Rats!" Bethia said scornfully.

"Rats yourself!"

"Oh, please don't, dearests," Dorothy pleaded. "Do finish these chocolates."

We fell to, and gradually took a more cheerful view. They were so awfully delicious.

Then we told Dorothy about our p'ans for the bazaar, and the "clock of Fate," as we had decided to call it. She was deeply interested, and promised to help us concoct the fortunes with an old fortune book that was up in the Manor library. That was simply great, and we told Dorothy so. She always thinks of the jolliest thing to do. When she had promised to show us her ball-dress from Paris as soon as it arrived, from some place that sounded like Deuce, she went off.

Two days afterwards we went to the Manor House for tea. Lots of the guests had come already, but Dorothy said we shouldn't be bothered with them, but have tea in the summer-house with her alone. We loved

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"No," Dorothy said sadly, "I have got to think of my figure. I've brought myself down to three chocolates a day."

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We had just begun on the cake, when somebody said: "Hullo, Dorothy!" at the door.

this, because the summer-house had been made pretty with rosebud chintz cushions, curtains tied up with tiny bows of blue and green, and white paint and flowers. We had just begun on the cake, when somebody said:

"Hullo, Dorothy!" at the door.

We stopped talking, and saw a tall man in grey flannels. He had crinkly, fair hair, which you could see he had tried to brush smooth, and very blue eyes. He was broad, too, and was shaved nice and clean. Bethia fell fearfully in love with him at first sight, she told me afterwards; but then Bethia fell fearfully in love with the curate, too, so that it hardly counts for much. I felt rather sick with him for interrupting. But Dorothy made the best of it, and asked him if he would have some tea. Then she introduced us properly.

"Lord Penton, Miss Bethia Stanford, Miss Gladys Stanford. You know Colonel Stanford, Dick?"

"*Rather*," he said, and shook us warmly by the hand — I should say hands.

We decided he was awfully jolly, and told him so right out after a bit. He had one of the nicest laughs I ever heard, except father's. He was a frightful tease, though, and he kept on making Dorothy blush—he was evidently ragging her about something or other we didn't know about, and we pumped her afterwards. We all went off to see the horses after tea, and had a simply heavenly time.

We saw a lot of Dorothy, as she had promised, that week, and nearly always Lord Penton, or Dick as we usually called him (he wasn't a bit grown-uppish you know), came, too. Dorothy even promised we should come to the garden party which was to be held two days before the bazaar. And Lady Rivers sent a special note to ask dad.

There were ever so many people there who

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weren't Milchester at all, and had motored over or were just staying with Lady Rivers. The Manor House holds such a lot of people. The best-dressed of them all, Bethia and I decided, was a lady they called Mrs. Raeburn. She had lovely golden hair, and a complexion that looked as if you could blow it off, all downy and pink, I mean. And she moved her eyes very slowly and smiled all the time. She wasn't exactly very young, and she wasn't a bit old, but what she was—fearfully and awfully—was grown-up.

Bethia didn't like her because she looked so tired. I didn't like her because she talked such a lot to Dick, and wasn't jolly like Dorothy about it, but took him right off to a corner, as if she didn't want us to join on. We felt pretty sick at that, and so did Dorothy, I believe, though she never said so. But what made us certain was that I heard Mrs. Fraser—the Honourable one, I mean, whose husband has a racing stable—say to a woman I didn't know, just as I was eating an ice (my sixth) behind the monkey-tree:

"Dorothy can scarcely be said to be in for the final now, can she!"

The other one said: "He was always a favourite of Hester's, especially just before her husband was killed, I've heard."

"Raeburn did the wise thing for once," Mrs. F. (the Honourable Mrs. F.) went on. "Hester Raeburn was going rather strong, you know, even for South Africa. I wonder if she'll marry Dickie."

"*Poor* Dickie!" said the other woman. "He's so young. He won't have a chance with her. His people won't object; she's worth anything since her husband died."

I'm not by any means dense, as dad will tell you, and I understood what they meant, or nearly all of it. Mrs. Raeburn was a widow, and she meant to marry Dick! Here was a pretty mess! And Bethia and I had planned out everything so nicely. Dick was to marry Dorothy, and we were to have a cottage in their garden and go into their stables whenever we liked, and teach their children to play hockey and cricket, and swimming.

I told Bethia everything when we got home, and we sat up in our beds for a long time that night talking it over. At last Bethia said:

"I have an idea!"

"A rotten one, I expect," I answered.

"No, it's a good one. Dick is *sure* to come to the bazaar, and he's sure to have his fortune told by the clock of Fate. Now, just let us write a fortune that will give him some real good advice instead of vague stuff like Dorothy's book, and he may take it, and live happy ever afterwards."

"Dick isn't an ass," I said. "He'd see through it."

"It wouldn't matter if he did. He couldn't say definitely that we made it up for him, because you'd be blindfolded. We would mark the place with a notch, and you could stop the clock-hand just by the notch."

It really did seem an excellent plan, and we thought out what we were going to say there and then. The next morning we carefully rubbed out one of the fortunes with ink-eraser and put in the new one. It was done very neatly, and did not show at all.

The day of the bazaar was ripping. I could tell you heaps about it, but perhaps I'd better not just now, because I want to get to the end of this story, and I expect you do, too. Dorothy looked a dear, and perfectly sweet. She had on another dress from Deuce, but Mrs. Raeburn's was lovelier still. She just sailed about the hall, looking as beautiful and supercilious as a queen, except when she was talking to Dick. And she kept on doing that. Before everyone else she called him "Lord Penton," but when nobody was near she called him "Dickie," and once "dearest," because I was behind the tea-urn and heard her. It is one disadvantage of being small for your age that you can't help overhearing sometimes, and you can never close up your ears with your fingers in time.

Our clock of Fate was a huge success. Almost all the people in the room had their fortunes told. Dick brought up Mrs. Raeburn for hers, and paid for it, and then said he would have sixpennyworth from the blind gipsy. Bethia spun the hands round on their wheels and felt stealthily for the notch. The hands were brought to a stop opposite, and, as usual, I read out the fortune at which it had stood still.

"Thou that readest here beware of a fair-haired widow. She seeketh to entice thee" (this Bethia got out of the Bible), "but believe her not. Thy good fortune lieth with a dark maiden of fair complexion, who loves thee already in secret. There lies much happiness and money before thee, and a journey right soon to a far country."

We stuck in about the money as a blind, and we knew he was going to India next year.

Dick didn't look a bit pleased; he murmured something under his breath which sounded like "disgusting taste," and got

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scarlet. Mrs. Raeburn blushed, too, and she doesn't look a bit nice like Dorothy when she blushes. Everyone heard, because they all wanted to see what Dick got in the way of a destiny, so he couldn't turn away as he wished to.

"Dear me," Mrs. Raeburn said. "What an *interesting* fortune, Lord Penton. So very explicit. It might have been written specially for the occasion by some witty person."

And they both went back, Mrs. Raeburn very cool and Dick very hot, to Lady Rivers' stall.

As luck had it, Dorothy wasn't there, and, of course, neither of us let on to her afterwards, but I don't believe she enjoyed herself much, or that Dick spoke at all to her, except to ask her if he might fetch her some tea afterwards.

"But it will sink in," Bethia said, as we went home that night, after having made five pounds by the clock of Fate alone.

"What?" I asked.

"The advice," Bethia replied.

But I was too jolly tired and cross to answer her.

The next night was the dance, and Dorothy ran over in the morning to see us. She wasn't quite herself, but she was very excited about the ball, as everyone was calling it. We asked her why she had not brought Dick; but she said he had gone out motoring with Mrs. Raeburn. The advice did not seem to have sunk yet; but, of course, I recognised the fact that one always has to wait. Advice takes a long time with me, I know.

Dorothy told us it was to last till three in the morning. The ball I, mean.

"Won't you get tired?" we asked.

"I could dance all night," Dorothy assured us. "Especially with a partner who suits me."

"Does Dick suit you?" Bethia asked.

Dorothy grew red again. "He's a very good dancer," she replied, and absolutely shut up.

We lay awake that night for some time imagining what it must feel like to go to a grown-up ball. Children's dances are such piffling affairs that you can't judge from them. Boys are so shy, and they always tread on your toes, and ask you what they may get you. I don't mind ices, of course, but there *is* a limit. At balls, in stories, they always propose, and we did wonder if Dick had proposed to Dorothy. We didn't like to ask her the next morning, although we were dying to.

She wasn't so delighted with the ball as she thought she would be, though, and we concluded this either meant she had refused him, or else he hadn't asked her.

We put a diplomatic question to her: "How many times did you dance with Dick?" and she said: "Twice." But she wasn't at all communicative or like herself.

Before she went she got dad to say he would bring us to the picnic they were going to have on the Saturday. Dad said yes, of course. He never says no, especially to Dorothy. As everyone was leaving the next week, it would have been a pity to have missed it.

It was gloriously fine on Saturday morning, and we got dressed by half-past ten, though we weren't to be at the Manor House till eleven. There were a good many motors and a governess cart and a dog-cart. We were to go to Moorhill Fort, a sort of old ruin six miles away. Bethia and I got separated, and father drove off with Lady Rivers. What was worse, because I was so little I got perched up behind on the narrow back seat of the high dog-cart with Mrs. Fraser (the Honourable one) and another woman in front, and the groom with me behind.

The groom finally got off, however, and jumped into something else, so that I was practically alone, because the others jabbered to each other and quite forgot me after we had started. Mrs. F. (the Honourable one) drove, of course. I didn't listen much to what they were saying, until I heard Dorothy's name.

"I can't believe it of her," Mrs. F. grunted.

"Neither can I. Yet everyone knows she manufactured the thing. Hester said she should have complained to Lady Rivers if she had not decided to treat it as a schoolgirlish trick in very bad taste. Lord Penton of course was furious."

"It will bring Dickie up to the gate, if she uses it well," Mrs. F. (the Honourable) said, flicking the horse. "I don't believe it of Dorothy, though."

"She certainly seems too old for that sort of thing, and apparently a charming girl. Still, you can never tell, nowadays."

"She's straight, I'll lay my last farthing," Mrs. F. declared, and I felt I could have hugged her. "You may depend, if there's any hocussing about, it'll be Hester Raeburn and not Dorothy. She's a sweet little soul, and however jealous she was, she'd never play it as low down as that."

"Yet there's the fact she actually made the clock of Fate."

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I suddenly realised what they were accusing Dorothy of, and my tongue dried up with indignation.

"It *wasn't!* It *wasn't!*" I was opening my mouth to shout, when the most surprising thing happened. In my excitement I had let go the seat-back to which I had been clinging, and the horse, jerking forward in answer to Mrs. F.'s lash, sent me right out into the middle of the road. Of course I screamed as soon as I got my breath after the bump, but the wind blew my voice in the other direction, and they went on, never suspecting they had left me behind in the road.

I tried to get up, but I couldn't; something seemed to have happened to my leg, which hurt like anything. Of course I didn't squeal. I managed to crawl into the grass at the side of the road, and decided to wait till someone came along. But there wasn't much of a chance along this road, which is frightfully lonely for miles and miles; and we had been the last to start.

There was nothing to do but to make up one's mind to it. So I did. But luck wasn't altogether against me, for I hadn't been there ten minutes, though it seemed ten hours, before I heard a horse's hoofs along the road. I raised myself up as far as I could, and shouted. It was Lord Penton. He had stopped to get something, and now was hurrying after the rest. He saw me at once, and pulled up.

"Hullo, kiddie," he said. "What's up!"

I told him what had happened, and he dismounted at once and came to me.

When he lifted me, I gave a great scream, the pain was so awful, and before I could be ashamed of it, I fainted right away for a minute. He says I did, at any rate. When I came to, he was carrying me very gently and walking his horse.

"Poor little girl," he whispered. "I *am* sorry. Buck up, though, it won't take us long to get to the village, and we'll doctor you up there. I'd put you on Jasmine, only I'm afraid you'd never stand the jolting."

I snuggled up against his coat and thanked him. Then as we walked along the awfulness of what I had heard in the dog-cart burst in upon me.

I bit my lip, so as not to mind the pain in my leg. Then I said in a fooling sort of way, because I couldn't help crying:

"Dick, I want to tell you something."

"You'd better keep quiet just now, old lady."

"But, Dick, I *must* tell you. It's about the bazaar."

I couldn't see his face, but I was sure it had grown stiff and unlike him.

"We won't say anything at all about that," he said grimly. And, though he didn't know it, he joggled me so that it hurt vilely.

"I must," I cried desperately. "I heard them talking about it in the dog-cart. It *wasn't* Dorothy who wrote that fortune. It was us! She didn't know anything about it. We wanted to give you good advice, Dick, and have you marry Dorothy, so that you could let us live in your garden in a cottage. And Dorothy was so unhappy about that yellow-haired woman."

He nearly dropped me, and I gave a little shriek.

He begged my pardon like anything, and then went on without a word.

Then he said in a funny voice:

"How did you know Dorothy—cared?"

"Didn't you?" I asked surprised.

"No," he answered very shortly.

Then he added after some while, between his teeth: "And that woman hinted——"

He didn't speak again for some while after that, and I whispered:

"Oh, Dick, are you very angry with me?"

He gave me a big kiss on my neck. It would have been my mouth, only he couldn't reach it.

We did get to the doctor's at last, and he left me there while he galloped after the rest. The doctor was rather a decent sort. He said there was no serious fracture, and that if I was plucky enough to be patient I ought to be all right again in six weeks. He also hurt me horribly, but, thank goodness, I am pretty brave.

After about an hour, I heard the touf-touf of a motor outside, and Dorothy ran in.

"Gladys, *darling!*" she exclaimed, "are you better now?" Dick and I have come to take you home."

"Don't be a goat, Dorothy," I said.

Then the doctor and Dick took me out into the motor which was waiting outside, and Dick and Dorothy and I went home. It was jolly decent of them to miss the picnic, for by the time they got back to Moorhill, Bethia said, it was quite tea-time.

Oh, and two days afterwards, Dorothy came in with Dick to see me and bring me a big box of chocolates. Dick bent low and whispered into my ear: "Can you keep a secret? I have taken your advice, old lady."

"What are you two saying?" asked Dorothy, who looked simply ripping.

"Never you mind," replied Dick.

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CAP AND BELLS

ALL ALIKE.

He had never kissed her, and was somewhat anxious to make up for lost time, so he said: "You might let me kiss you—just once."

"No," she replied, playfully shaking her head. "I know what just once means—it means half-a-dozen times. You are like all the rest."

* * * * *

HE NEEDED ONE.

UNCLE CHARLES: "And are you going to buy me something for my birthday?"

MILLIE: "Yeth."

UNCLE: "Please may I know?"

MILLIE: "Yeth. I'm going to buy my dear Uncle Charlie a missionary."

UNCLE: "A missionary! I am no cannibal."

MILLIE: "No, but grandma thays you are a puffect heathen."

* * * * *

I'LL NOT BE LONG.

"I'll not be long," she said, "if you'll just wait—
I'll be as quick as ever I can be!"
"Dearest," I cried, "how often must I state
My one wish is—that you'll *be-long* . . to me!"
R. Mertun.

* * * * *

IMPOSSIBLE TO SATISFY.

"What kind of a house do you want?" asked the architect.

"Oh," replied the citizen wearily, "I don't want a house at all. I just want you to build me three tiers of cupboards, one hundred and thirty cupboards in a tier, and put a roof over the top tier. I want to put up a house that will contain enough cupboards to satisfy my wife."

But the architect, who was a man of broad experience, told him he would have to put a thousand cupboards in a tier, and make the e lifice six storeys high, and then his wife would say, when it was completed, that there wasn't anywhere to put away her things.

GOING TO EXTREMES.

FAIR LADY (with large conversational aperture): "Can't you make the mouth a little smaller?"

PHOTOGRAPHER: "Goodness me! Do you want a picture without any mouth at all? I've pared it down three inches already."

* * * *

AN UNEXPECTED ANSWER.

All was silence and attention
In the dim and crowded court,
And the magistrate, the bench on,
Waited for the long report.

The policeman, tall and surly,
With a pair of monstrous feet,
Told of awful hurly-burly
That had happened on his beat.

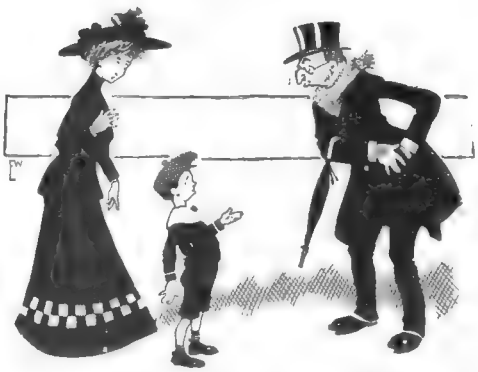
How the prisoner in a passion,
Mad with rum, had blocked the way,
Filled the tide of wealth and fashion
With a measureless dismay.

And the prisoner, still dirt-haunted,
Worn and torn, and dark with grime,
Heard, with aspect all undaunted,
Heard the story of his crime.

Then, his grimy hands upraising,
In a passion wild and free,
Thus he cried: "Oh, talk amazing!
Powers of truth, can such things be?

"Oh, how long shall I be harried
By the wicked of the land?
By the troubled waters carried,
Coldly thrust from hand to hand?

"Oh, how long?" And through the quiet
Of the court-room's darkened maze,
Came the stern judicial fiat—
Came the answer: *"Thirty days!"*



"Sammy," said his mean uncle, "how would you feel if I were to give you a penny?"
"I think," replied Sammy, "that I should feel a little faint at first, but I'd try and get over it."

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THE MAN WHO WANTED TO ESCAPE CHRISTMAS.

1908
DECEMBER
2
① He decides to escape
② He packs his bag and leaves London
③ Dover at last.
④ To Marseilles and the Sunny South.
⑤ Up the Mediterranean
⑥ Out into the Desert.
HOTEL
GEO. MORROW
⑦ CHRISTMAS DAY "Thank goodness they know nothing of Christmas here. Oh, bring anything you've got!"
HOTEL
⑧ "Voila! the Turkey, milord, and see, the Plum Pudding, he come quick!"

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THERE WERE WORSE DEPTHS.

Two Englishmen who had been bosom friends went to America. They met with poor success, drifted apart, and finally one took a position as waiter in a cheap restaurant. He had not been there long before his friend appeared at dinner time. The meeting was not over-joyful.

"Why, old man, you down to a waiter, eh? Gracious, how you have fallen; and in a restaurant like this, too."

"Yes," replied the waiter, turning on his friend sarcastically, "but I don't eat here, thank goodness!"

* * *

A GRIM THREAT.

A journalist sat for many weary minutes in the waiting-room of one of our medical celebrities. His patience at an end, he called the servant and said: "My man, just go in and tell your master that if I am not admitted in five minutes I shall be well again."

Why not the "Flip-flap" at the Zoo?

* * * * *

AN EXPLANATION.

He never takes the papers, for "they're dull as all creation,"
And besides, he's "up" with everything that goes;
That's why the train has left him when he gallops to the station,
And his friends are dead a year before he knows.

He never takes the papers, for he isn't a believer
In the news and the sensations of the day;
That's why they put his business in the hands of a receiver,
And his creditors are hauling him away!

* * * * *

A SEASONABLE THOUGHT.

There are some things a dwarf can't do, but he can catch as big a cold as a giant.

COOL TO THE LAST.

By thrift he had become well-to-do, and he had a splendid St. Bernard dog which he was very proud of. One day the servant came to him horror-stricken.

"Master, master! Cæsar is——"

"Is what?"

"Mad! He won't touch water, and he foams from the mouth constantly."

"Goodness gracious! It is lucky you discovered it in time. You must not lose a minute. Take the animal at once, before he has bitten anyone——"

"Yes, sir."

"And sell him!"

* * *

A MODERN CRITIC.

HUSBAND (after the theatre): "Well, how do you like the piece?"

WIFE: "Very much. There's only one improbable thing in it. The second act takes place two years after the first, and they have the same servant."

* * * * *

THE REASON WHY.

ENGLISHMAN: "Is land dear in Japan?"

JAPANESE: "No; but the ground rents are awful."

ENGLISHMAN: "What is the cause of that?"

JAPANESE: "Earthquakes."

* * * * *

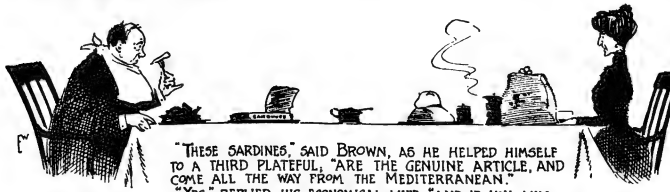
ITS USUAL DESTINATION.

He was a motorist, and called at a farmhouse for a glass of water, but the farmer's pretty daughter offered him a glass of milk instead.

"Won't you have another glass?" she asked, as he drained the tumbler.

"You are very good," he said, "but I am afraid I shall rob you."

"Oh, no. We have so much more than we can use ourselves that we are giving it to the calves all the time."



"THESE SARDINES," SAID BROWN, AS HE HELPED HIMSELF TO A THIRD PLATEFUL, "ARE THE GENUINE ARTICLE, AND COME ALL THE WAY FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN."

"YES," REPLIED HIS ECONOMICAL WIFE, "AND IF YOU WILL ONLY CONTROL YOUR APPETITE THEY WILL GO A GREAT DEAL FURTHER."

[CAP AND BELLS continued overleaf.]

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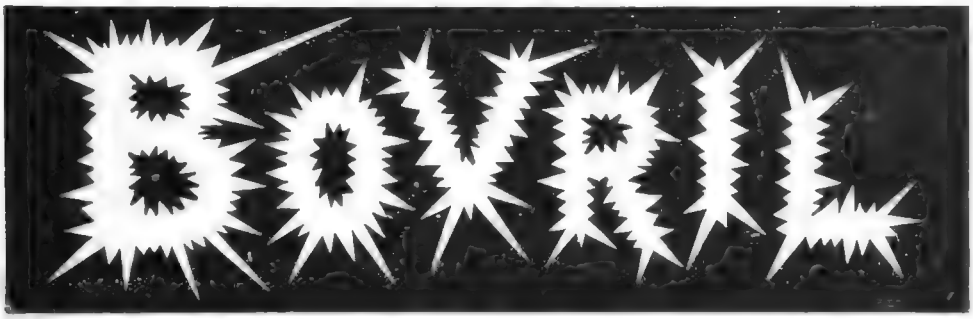

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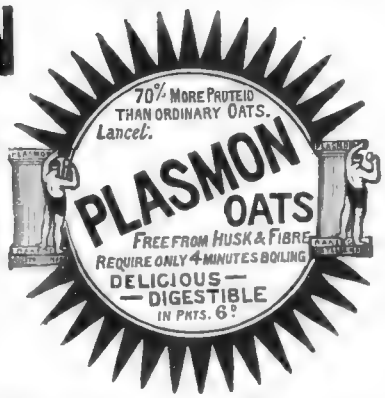

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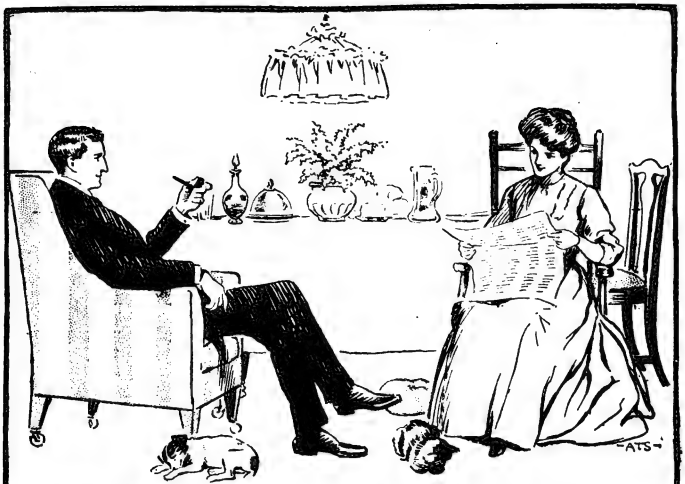

AFTER Dinner—Rest awhile

BUT
don't forget
to wash up
the
DINNER
THINGS
with

Hudson's Soap

H5 IN PACKETS EVERYWHERE.

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KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

Affection for dumb animals is a commendable characteristic, but it can sometimes be carried a little too far. An instance of this came under the notice of a chemist in a Midland town the other day, when a well-dressed lady entered his place of business and asked:

"Can my dog have a fit in you shop?"

Thinking the worthy woman was suffering from mental aberration, the genial vendor of drugs replied in the affirmative, and to his surprise the quadruped which had accompanied his strange visitor gave a yell and fell to the ground in a fit. The lady made a small purchase, and explained that the dog was subject to fits, which would have justified his early death had he belonged to anyone less fond of him than his present owner, and that whenever he was so attacked she took him into a druggist's shop, so that, if necessary, he could have the use of the chemist's knowledge. The animal, which had been left lying on the floor, soon recovered, and the lady departed, the tradesman assuring her:

"I shall be glad any time you are passing to allow your dog to have a fit in my shop."

* * * *

AN ACQUISITION.

COAL DEALER: "You say you have been in the coal business before, yet I find you picking pieces of slate out of the sacks."

NEW DRIVER: "I always do that, sir, after I've weighed the coal."

DEALER: "Oh, you have weighed it? Then it's all right. You may consider yourself permanently employed."

* * * *

THE DIFFERENCE.

BARKER CARPER: "I wanted my eggs soft! I told the waiter that I wanted them 'soft as the breath of a maiden's yes.'"

MAN OPPOSITE: "And how are they, sir?"

BARKER CARPER: "Hard, sir! Hard as the thud of a maiden's 'no.'"

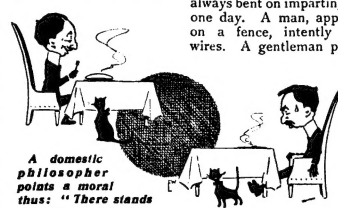
EVENLY MATCHED.

Magistrate (to witness): "And where were you when this assault occurred?"

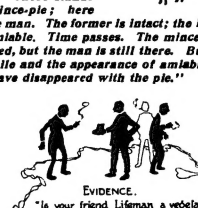
Witness: "Just across the street, your worship."

Magistrate: "Then why didn't you go to the plaintiff's assistance when you saw him attacked?"

Witness: "Faix, I wasn't sure then that he wouldn't be the defendant, your worship."



A domestic philosopher points a moral thus: "There stands the mince-pie; here sits the man. The former is intact; the latter smiling and amiable. Time passes. The mince-pie has disappeared, but the man is still there. But where are the smile and the appearance of amiability? Alas! they have disappeared with the pie."



EVIDENCE.

"Is your friend Lifeman a vegetarian?"

"I believe he is."

"What makes you think so? Have you ever dined at his house?"

"No, but I've smoked one or two of his cigars."

TOO PREVIOUS.

The organ has just begun to play.

MAMMA: "Have you found the place, darling?"

DARLING: "Not yet, ma." (To organist at the top of her voice): "Please 'top a minny, we isn't ready yet."

* * * *

A JOB WORTH HAVING.

At the Zoo the keeper gives the lion a large piece of meat.

POET: "Does he get that often?"

KEEPER: "He gets it regularly twice a day."

POET (with clasped hands): "What a boon it would be if I could get a position as lion here!"

* * *

A MINE OF USEFUL INFORMATION.

One of those good-natured persons who are always bent on imparting information was humiliated one day. A man, apparently a yokel, was seated on a fence, intently looking at the telegraph wires. A gentleman passing said:

"Watching the wires, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Waiting to see a message go by, eh?"

The man smiled and said: "Yes, sir."

The gentleman kindly told him that messages were invisible, and explained the work of the electric current to him at length. Concluding he said:

"Now you know something about it."

"Yes, sir."

"What do you work at?"

"Me and my mate over yonder are telegraph workers, and we're just putting up a new wire."

You should know your man before you impart unasked-for information.

* * * *

GETTING HIS MONEY'S-WORTH.

CUSTOMER: "I say, Mr. Barber, I don't hear your scissors at work on my hair."

BARBER: "There is very little hair on your head, sir."

CUSTOMER: "That makes no difference. I pay my money, and I want you to rattle the scissors on the bald place just the same as if it had hair on it."

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THE DIFFERENCE.

"Oh dear, no, my son, we do not steal the poor natives of Africa now and sell them into slavery. We just steal their country and charge them a pretty little rent for the privilege of living in it. Yes, my son, the world has improved greatly in morals during the last half-century."

* * * * *

DUE CONSIDERATION.

"I hope, Jennie, that you have given the matter serious consideration?" said a lady to a servant girl who had "given notice" because she was to be married that day two weeks.

"Oh, I have, ma'am," was the earnest reply. "I have been to two fortune-tellers and a clairvoyant, and looked in a sign book, and dreamed on a lock of his hair, and been to one of these asterologers and to a meejum, and they all say go ahead, ma'am. I ain't one to marry reckless like."

* * *

SHE KNEW.

"What did Noah live on when the flood had subsided and his provisions in the ark were exhausted?" asked a Sunday-school teacher of her class on Sunday.

"I know," squeaked a little girl, after all the others had given it up.

"Well, what?" inquired the teacher.

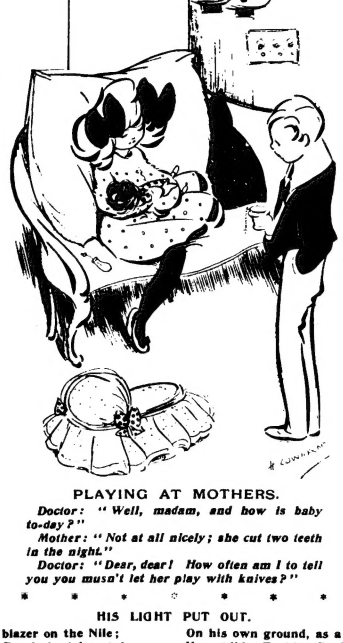
"Dry land."

* * *

THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY.

SMITH: "I saw you carrying home a basket of nice looking greengages last night, Brown; how much did they cost?"

BROWN: "I don't know yet. The doctor is up at the house now."



PLAYING AT MOTHERS.

Doctor: "Well, madam, and how is baby to-day?"

Mother: "Not at all nicely; she cut two teeth in the night."

Doctor: "Dear, dear! How often am I to tell you you musn't let her play with knives?"

* * * * * * * * * * *

LOST.

The poet filled his fountain pen,
And screwed the nozzle in again,
And weary was his sigh.
"Each of those previous words has fled
I can't remember *one*," he said,
"However much I try."

He turned his footsteps home once more;
Explained (his wife was at the door);
She merely murmured: "Oh, sir,
You'll get no dinner, then, to-day,
If you've forgotten, as you say,
The order for the grocer."

S. M.

* * *

TWO OF THEM.

A so-called wit the other day, upon meeting an acquaintance about to be married to an heiress of the name of Abernethy, accosted him in this wise:

"Halloa, old chap, allow me to congratulate you. Going to marry Miss Biscuits, I hear?"

"Yes, and the tin, too!" was the reply.

* * *

THE BETTER PART.

A young lady who had accidentally cut the point off her index finger with a chopper was coming from church with her finger bandaged.

"What's the matter wi' yer haun', Miss Parritch?" queries an admirer who accompanied her home.

"Oh," replied the young lady, "I choppit a wee bit aff my forefinger."

The young man looked sentimental and blurted out: "Oh, how I wish I had *that* wee bit."

To which the young lady naively responded: "Would ye no raither hae *the bit that's left?*"

HIS LIGHT PUT OUT.

He had worn a coloured blazer on the Nile;
He had sported spats in Persia just for style;
With a necktie quite too utter,
In the streets of old Calcutta,
He had stirred up quite a flutter for awhile.

The maids of Java thronged before his door,
Attracted by the trousers which he wore;
And his vest, a bosom venter,
Shook Formosa to its centre,
And they hailed him as a Mentor by the score.

On his own ground, as a "masher" in the street,
He outdid a Turkish Pasha, who stood treat.
He gave Shanghai girls the jumps,
And their cheeks stuck out like mumps,
At the patent leather pumps upon his feet.

But he called upon a London girl one night,
With a necktie ready-made, which wasn't right;
And she looked at him, this maid did,
And he faded, and he faded,
And he faded, and he faded out of sight.

[*CAP AND BELLS continued overleaf.*]

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TO TASTE.

ACTRESS: "Doctor, I don't feel as if I could possibly act to-night."

DOCTOR: "What, madam, seems to be the matter with you?"

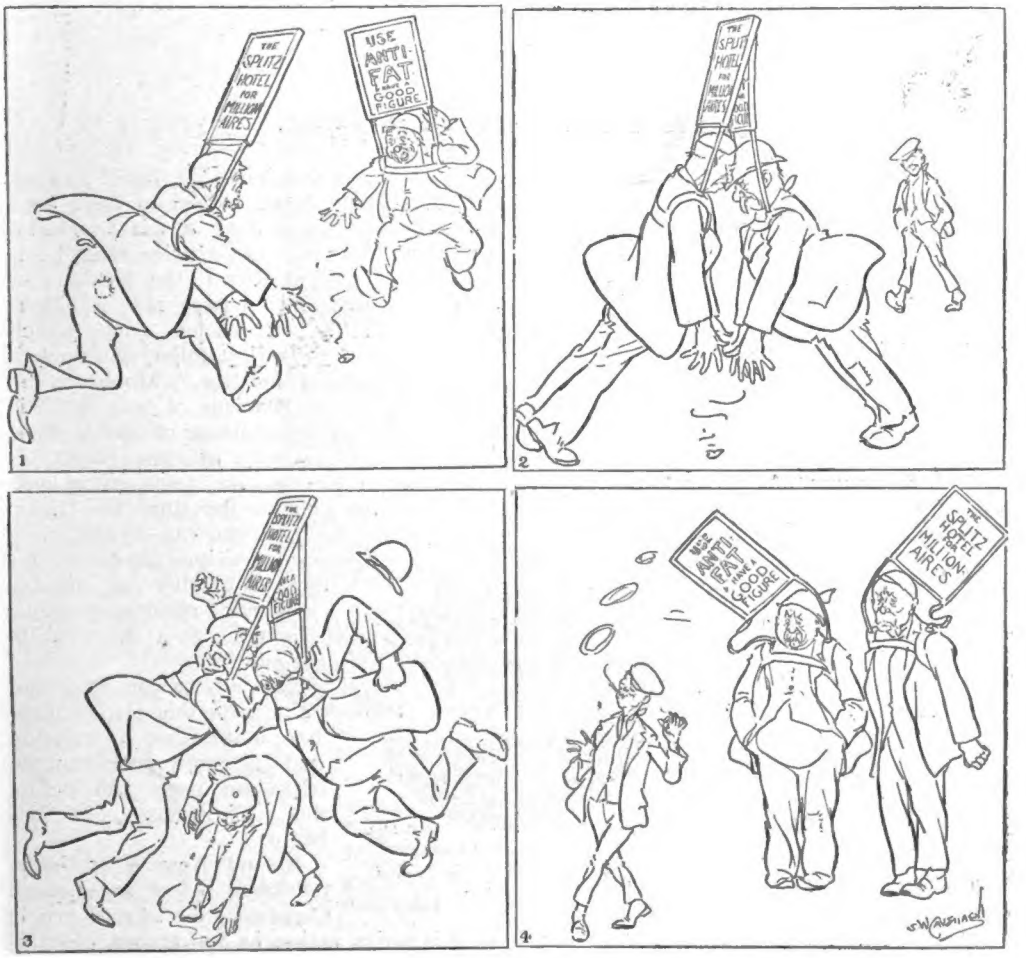
ACTRESS: "Oh, I don't care much, doctor. Give me the worst ailment you can for a five-pound note."

THE VALUE OF APPEARANCES.

He was a fine-looking man, and he proudly strutted down the pavement with an air of proprietorship in every movement.

"Beg pardon," said a stranger, as he stepped up to him, hat in hand, in utmost humility. "Do I have your permission to remain in town over night?"

IT ENDED IN SMOKE.



HIS CONTRIBUTION.

"Sir," began a stranger, as he walked directly up to a business man in Threadneedle Street, "I am strictly on business."

"So am I."

"Good! I believe every man should furnish money for his own tombstone."

"So do I."

"Good again! I want to raise £5 to pay for a stone at my grave. What assistance will you render the enterprise? I want a business answer."

"You shall have it, sir. Unless you immediately take your departure I will aid the enterprise by furnishing the corpse." The stranger hurried off.

HE WANTED TOO MUCH.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: "Do you happen to know of a young lady to suit me; one who is beautiful, young, rich, and well educated?"

MATRIMONIAL AGENT: "Excuse me, dear sir, but out of those qualities I generally contrive to make four matches."

* * * * *

ONE ADVANTAGE.

"There is one thing about a dog's pants," said Harkins.

"What's that?"

"They never bag at the knee."

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

A Seasonable Wish and a Few Stray Words.

CHRISTMAS AGAIN!

First of all—a merry Christmas to you all!

Fancy wishing anybody a merry Christmas to-day! Outside, the sun is shining so fervently that we instinctively walk along the shady side of the street; I am still wearing summer flannels, and my straw hat shows few signs of decay. For I am writing these words on October 7th, several weeks before the Christmas Royal sees the light. Printing has not yet been brought to such perfection as to allow a magazine to go to press the night before publication, especially when several hundred thousands have to be printed. So it's in the loveliest of summer weather that I'm forced to wish you all—and my wish is none the less sincere for that—a merry Christmas.

MRS. DE COURCY LAFFAN.

It is with great pleasure that I publish on this page the portrait of Mrs. De Courcy Laffan, the founder of the Brotherhood of Hero Dogs. On page 172 you will read all about them—a charming little sheaf of stories. Many of you have enjoyed Mrs. Laffan's books—she is a novelist of rare distinction and feeling. Her passionate love of animals is one of the many gracious traits of her charming personality.

Photo *C. Vandyk.*

Mrs. De Courcy Laffan.
The founder of the Brotherhood of Hero Dogs.

EXIT "MR. X"—ENTER MR. DAVID DEVANT.

As I told you a month or two ago, "Mr. X" has vanished without leaving an address behind him. He may or may not return—that remains to be seen—his movements were always so eccentric. Meanwhile enter on the stage of The Royal the greatest living wizard—his name will instinctively spring to the lips of most readers—Mr. David Devant. I count myself lucky indeed to have been able to secure the services of this wonderful conjuror. The series of articles which he is contributing to The Royal, the first one of which you will find on page 166, is chiefly valuable in that it teaches tricks which everyone, even the veriest duffer, can do with a little care and practice. Moreover, no apparatus, no mechanism of any kind is required for the performance of any of these tricks, nothing but such ordinary objects as pencils, rulers, handkerchiefs, string, etc.

Christmas is the time for tricks. The man who can do them is a welcome visitor anywhere, for there is nothing that enlivens a party of children or adults so much as a little skilful conjuring.

Now, any of you who have a turn for this sort of thing have ample time to study up and practise to perfection the tricks on page 166 before the Christmas festivities begin.

In my New Year issue, published a few days before Christmas, the second article of this series makes its appearance, containing a further instalment of easy and ingenious tricks. You'll also be able to learn some of these in time to make yourself a sought-after guest.

Mr. Devant's style and exposition are as clear and simple as his art in its higher branches is mystifying and complex. The patter which he has designed to accomplish the performance of each trick is light, humorous, and quite easy to learn. I repeat, nobody need be afraid he will not understand these tricks. They are simple as the alphabet.

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